

**THE GOSPELS OF MARK AND MATTHEW
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

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Statement of Authorship and Sources

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

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Statement of Appreciation and Dedication

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Abstract

The New Testament is witness to disagreement in the early church about whether Gentile converts to the good news needed to abide by the ritualistic aspects of the Jewish Torah. One view, advocated by Paul, was that Gentiles did not need to adhere to these aspects of the Law. Another view, promoted by James and Peter in the Jerusalem Church, held that the Torah had not been moved aside with Jesus' ministry. As such, there were different views in the early church about what an appropriate Gentile mission should entail, and this tension is seen at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts. 15:1-21; Gal. 2:1-10), the Incident at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14), the Crisis at Galatia (Gal. 1:1-24), as well as at other times in Paul's missionary career (Phil. 3:2-6). The premise of this study is that this early church disagreement was not resolved during Paul's lifetime but continued into the late first century and is reflected in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew.

Mark's advocacy for a Law-free Gentile mission is seen in the Markan Jesus' active efforts to take the gospel to Gentiles (Mark 4:35-5:20; 6:45-52; 7:24-8:9; 8:13-9:29), in his stories that promote such an undertaking (Mark 7:24-30; 8:1-9), and in his liberal attitude towards the Torah (Mark 2:23-3:6; 7:15, 19b). Matthew, while using Mark's Law-free Gospel, promotes a Law-abiding Gospel. This is seen in his insistence that the Torah is eternally binding (Matt. 5:17-19), in his final commission where Gentiles are welcomed into this Law-abiding gospel (Matt. 28:16-20), and in the changes he makes to some Markan stories (Matt. 15:1-20 cf. Mark 7:1-23).

These evangelists' different positions can also be seen in how they represent the leaders of the Law-abiding movement, namely the disciples and family of Jesus. Mark portrays the disciples as steadily becoming more and more foolish as the Gospel goes on, and culminates in their betrayal, desertion, and denial of him (Mark 14:43-72). His portrayal of the family of Jesus is particularly poor, where he writes that Jesus rejects them (Mark 3:31-35), cannot work around them (Mark 6:16), and implies that they are guilty of the unforgivable sin (Mark 3:19b-30). Matthew keeps the basic narrative structure of the disciples' portrayal in Mark, but tones down the criticism they are given, explicitly gives them responsibility in the future church (Matt. 16:17-19; 18:18; 19:28; 28:19-20), and adds a resurrection narrative where they are reconciled with the risen Jesus (Matt. 28:16-20). He also considerably refines the portrait of Jesus' family, adding an infancy narrative where they are portrayed very positively (Matt. 1:18-2:23). These different portrayals, viewed through the context of the early church, likely reflect each author's different views of these figures' promotion of a Law-abiding Gentile mission.

The final part of this study looks at recent questions about the relationship between these Gospels and Paul. In addressing the idea that Mark was influenced by Paul, it is seen that while

Mark and Paul share a few key controversial points in common – namely promotion of a Law-free gospel and tension with the Jerusalem Church – there is no indication that Mark received these ideas from Paul. Instead, it is more likely that Mark and Paul were two independently Law-free Christian movements. On the question of whether Matthew was consciously criticising Paul, it is seen that while Matthew at places can be said to criticise a general Law-free theology (Matt. 5:17-19; 7:21-23) there is nothing specifically Pauline in his critique. In both cases then, it is seen that the Law-free movement was bigger than Paul, and that both Gospels could have been reacting to different Law-free movements in the first century church. While in retrospect Mark can be said to align more closely to Paul, and Matthew can be said to stand in tension with him, there is no evidence that either evangelist was consciously doing so.

Mark and Matthew then, can be seen to strongly reflect different sides of the continuing debates in the early church about the relevance of the ritualistic aspects of the Torah for Gentiles, and studying both Gospels together in this context demonstrates how pervasive this debate was in the first Christian century.

Abbreviations

<i>ABR</i>	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
<i>AeJT</i>	<i>Australian eJournal of Theology</i>
<i>ASE</i>	<i>Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
<i>ET</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HTS</i>	<i>HTS Teologiese Studies</i>
<i>ICS</i>	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>Neo</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>

<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTR</i>	<i>New Theology Review</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
<i>RIL</i>	<i>Religion and Intellectual Life</i>
<i>SBT</i>	<i>Studia Biblica et Theologica</i>
<i>SCJR</i>	<i>Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
<i>ThG</i>	<i>Theologie der Gegenwart</i>
<i>TZT</i>	<i>Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie</i>
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Introduction

One of the foremost debates in the first century church was whether Gentile converts to the good news needed to abide by the ritualistic aspects of the Jewish Torah. One view, promoted most prominently by Paul, was that Gentiles did not need to abide by the ritualistic aspects of the Law. Another view, endorsed by members of the church in Jerusalem, including Peter and James, held that Jesus had not abolished the Jewish Law, and consequently their view of a Gentile conversion was one that accompanied a full commitment to Judaism and the Torah. There is ample evidence throughout the New Testament that this was a topic of continuing debate. This is most clearly seen at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1-10), when delegates from the Antiochene church (including Paul) came to Jerusalem to meet with the Jerusalem apostles to discuss the issue. But no real resolution was apparently reached because the issue continued to remain contentious after the Council (Gal. 2:11-14, 15-16, 21), and after the deaths of Paul and James. Even into the next generation, the Christian movement had no singular and unified response to this question; instead there were at least two different schools of thought on the issue that existed alongside each other.

The aim of this thesis is to place the Gospels of Mark and Matthew in the context of these early church disagreements, and it will be argued that this tension is reflected in these Gospels. Studies of Matthew and Mark are abundant, but little has been written about these Gospels in the specific context of the debates in the early church about Gentiles and the Law. While the matter was not a central concern for either evangelist, when the Gospels are viewed within this framework it is clear that the two held different opinions on the subject and also show tension with the opposing school of thought. The Markan Jesus consistently breaks down the barriers between Jew and Gentile, routinely questioning ritual aspects of the Torah (2:18-3:5; 7:1-23; 10:2-9; 12:28-34), and he implicitly but strongly promotes a Gentile mission where Gentiles are not required to convert to Judaism. These aspects of Mark indicate that he agreed with the Law-free view in the early church. On the other hand, Matthew had a more conservative view of the Law than most, if not all, New Testament authors and insists that the entire Torah is still in place (5:17-19; 7:21-23; 23:23). The evangelist promotes a Gentile mission within this same framework (28:16-20), thus advocating that Gentiles too should adhere to the Torah. Matthew was thus more sympathetic to the Law-abiding gospel.

The controversy can also be seen in how some of the original players of the early church debates are portrayed in each Gospel. Mark portrays the original members of the Jerusalem Church, Jesus' disciples and his family, negatively; the disciples frequently do not understand Jesus' teaching (4:13; 6:51-52; 8:32; 9:31-32; 10:35-45) and eventually abandon him just before his crucifixion (14:50; 66-72), while Jesus' family are rarely heard of (3:20-35; 6:1-6) and accuse

Jesus of being mad (3:21). Matthew, on the other hand, draws a positive portrait of the disciples and family of Jesus (1:18-25; 28:8-20), and they are ultimately given the key responsibility for the continuing church (16:17-19; 18:18) and the Gentile mission (28:19-20). While Mark criticises the Law-abiding figures in the early church, Matthew emphasises the validity of their authority. The place of Mark and Matthew in the early church can also shed light on recent discussions about how Pauline theology may or may not be reflected in their texts. While there has been a notable increase in support for a positive Pauline influence on Mark, the debate about Paul and Matthew has been about whether the evangelist was criticising a Pauline theology in his narrative.

These differences between Mark and Matthew are all the more significant given that Matthew used Mark as his primary source,¹ and further evidence of their different views can be observed in Matthew's amendments to Mark (Mark 7:1-23 cf. Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 3:19-35 cf. Matt. 12:24-32, 46-50). This theological tension between Matthew and his source is infrequently noticed in scholarly literature; while it is undeniable that Matthew saw a lot to like in the Gospel of Mark and the two evangelists share a lot of theological and historical ideas,² the topic of the Law and Gentile mission and the portrait of the members of the Jerusalem Church were aspects of the Markan Gospel that Matthew evidently saw the need to rework.

Studying the Gospels in this way is significant because it connects them with the events of the earliest Christian movement. The Gospels were not uninfluenced by the events that preceded them, but are actually closely connected to earlier church history. This study aims to emphasise that the Gospels are a result of the traditions that came before them; the evangelists were not immune to the long-running disagreements between Paul and Jerusalem on Gentiles and the Law, and their Gospels demonstrate that they were very much a part of the disputes that troubled the early church.

¹ Markan priority will be assumed in this study, which is the firm consensus of biblical scholarship. For recent analysis see: P. M. Head, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem: An Argument for Markan Priority* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1997); J. S. Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000); R. A. Derrenbacker, *Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem* (Leuven: University Press, 2005), 211-55; C. M. Tuckett, 'The Current State of the Synoptic Problem', in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, ed. P. Foster, A. Gregory, J. S. Kloppenborg, and J. Verheyden (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011), 9-50. Even in his argument against Q, M. Goodacre supports Markan priority; M. Goodacre, *The Case against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002). In support of Matthean priority see especially W. R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis* (Dillsboro: Western North Carolina Press, 1976), 199-232; *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke*, ed. D. B. Peabody, L. Cope, and A. J. McNicol (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002).

² B. H. Streeter calculates that Matthew used 90% of Mark. B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*, Second ed. (London: Macmillan, 1924), 151. Recently, J. A. Doole argued for Matthew's entirely positive attitude towards Mark; J. A. Doole, *What Was Mark for Matthew?: An Examination of Matthew's Relationship and Attitude to His Primary Source* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

Review of the Literature

No prior study has examined both Mark and Matthew in detail in the context of early church debates around the relevance of the Law for Gentiles. While the debate around division in the early church over this matter has been around for some time,³ few scholars have looked to Mark and Matthew for their perspectives on the same issues.⁴ Similarly, while many scholars have looked at the social and historical contexts of Mark and Matthew, far fewer trace these back to the disputes in the early church. Instead, the Gospels are typically examined in their individual social contexts or in comparison with other Gospels. The two areas are often dealt with separately; the early church as one era, and the Gospels as a separate era. This separate treatment of the first century is commonplace, but it is surprising given that Mark was probably written less than ten years after the death of Paul. Despite this tendency in scholarship, there are some scholars who have drawn the Gospels of Mark and Matthew into the debates of the early church, most notably D. C. Sim, and to a lesser extent, M. D. Goulder, and J. Svartvik.

The most prominent contemporary scholar in this area is undoubtedly D. C. Sim. In his 1998 monograph on Matthew, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism*, Sim aims to place Matthew in his particular Christian Jewish context. He argues that the Gospel was written at Antioch on the Orontes,⁵ and as such, was written in a city that had been an important centre for the early Christian movement. The controversy in the earliest church is evident in the distinction Luke draws between Hellenists and Hebrews in Acts 6:1, two groups who Sim argues had a tense relationship due to the Hellenists' independent mission and teaching that criticised the Law and the Temple. Upon persecution, the Hellenists fled Jerusalem and settled in Antioch where they conducted the first missions to the Gentiles.⁶ While Antioch originally was the centre and origin of the Hellenist's Law-free Gentile mission, the Incident at Antioch changed the setting significantly. Sim writes that this event was a severe conflict between Paul and the Law-free Hellenists on one side, and James and the Law-abiding Jerusalem community on the other. The outcome led to Paul's departure, and to a complete change in the gospel practised in the Antiochene Church. After

³ See especially F. C. Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*, Third ed. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1878), 44-98; J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations* (London: Macmillan, 1890); and more recently, J. D. G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making, Volume Two: Beginning from Jerusalem* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); I. J. Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers: The Galatian Crisis in Its Broadest Historical Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

⁴ F. C. Baur did not look at Mark and Matthew from this perspective, even though he looked at both Luke and John; Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 77-82, 155-81. J. D. G. Dunn, who looked at Mark and Matthew in his enormous works on Christianity in the Making, also did not assess their position in the debates he had been discussing. J. D. G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making, Volume Three: Neither Jew nor Greek: A Contested Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 221-275.

⁵ D. C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 53-62.

⁶ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 64-77

this event, Antioch became a centre for the Law-*abiding* gospel under the leadership of Peter. This community, Sim argues, fully obeyed the Torah, and had an anti-Pauline attitude, which was later reflected in Matthew's Gospel.⁷ Sim argues that the conflict between these two branches of the church was quite severe; that they were competing factions in the early church and had a sour relationship. He writes that the Jerusalem Church, under the leadership of James, continued to plague Paul's missionary efforts in order to 'Judaize' his Gentile converts,⁸ and that such anti-Pauline movements continued to exist into the second century.⁹

Turning to Matthew's Gospel, Sim argues that the Matthean text reflects the position of the Antiochene Church under Peter, and that Matthew clearly expresses his allegiance to the Jerusalem Church in its conflict with Pauline Christianity. This is done in his changes to Mark's story. Sim argues that Matthew rehabilitates the family of Jesus, including James (Matt. 1:20-23; 12:46-50; 13:53-58),¹⁰ rehabilitates the characters of the disciples by teaching directly to them and emphasising that they understand Jesus' teaching (esp. 13:23, 51; also 9:37-11:1; 13:10-23, 36-52; 16:5-12, 24-28; 17:10-13, 19-21; 18:1-35; 19:23-20:19; 21:20-22),¹¹ expands Peter's leadership role (e.g. 16:17-19; 17:24-27),¹² and attacks the Law-free gospel (5:17-19; 16:17-19).¹³ Sim also claims that Pauline missionaries would have targeted Antioch after Paul's death, causing Matthew to be particularly opposed to them.¹⁴ By making these amendments to Mark's story, Sim claims that Matthew was an 'active participant' in the early church's dispute.¹⁵

In *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism*, Sim has drawn a picture of a factionalised church severely divided as a result of different positions on the relevance of the Law, and he claims that Matthew's Gospel reflects this serious division. His arguments are very detailed and thorough, more than can be summarised in this short space, but the finer arguments he uses will continuously be referred to throughout this study.

Sim has added to his focus on Matthew with smaller contributions that bring Mark into the factionalism in the early church. In 2011 Sim wrote an article entitled 'Matthew's Use of Mark: Did Matthew Intend to Supplement or Replace His Primary Source?' in which he argues that

⁷ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 100-06.

⁸ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 101-03.

⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 172-88.

¹⁰ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 188-92.

¹¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 192-96.

¹² Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 196-99.

¹³ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 199-211.

¹⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 211-12.

¹⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 188.

Matthew wrote his Gospel in order to replace Mark's Gospel, which he considered to be inferior.¹⁶ He argues that Matthew was displeased with Mark in a number of key areas, including their different views on the role of the Torah; Mark had a liberal view of the ritual aspects of the Law (7:1-23), while Matthew held a more conservative view (5:17-19).¹⁷ While Matthew and Mark had a lot in common as early Christians, the two had opposing views on Jesus' attitude towards the Law, and subsequently its role in the Christian community.¹⁸ The issue of the Law, Sim insists, was very significant, and was the main cause behind the divide between Paul and the Jerusalem Church. It was so important, Sim writes, that one could describe it as 'the single most divisive issue in the Christian first century'.¹⁹ The issue was the cause of the Council of Jerusalem, the Incident at Antioch, the problems at Galatia, and possibly also behind problems in Corinth and Philippi, and extending further into the post-Pauline period.²⁰ Matthew and Mark, he writes, were on opposing sides of this important and divisive conflict, and as such, full weight must be given to this difference when looking at Matthew's perceived value of Mark. Mark's advocacy of a Law-free mission legitimises Paul's activity, and he delegitimises Paul's opponents (the family and disciples of Jesus).²¹ Matthew, on the other hand, while using Mark, has eliminated or edited the Pauline aspects of Mark, as well as confined Jesus' mission to Jews alone (10:5-6; 15:24), and given responsibility for the Jewish and Gentile missions to the disciples (28:16-20), defying Paul's claim that he was the apostle to the Gentiles. Matthew also rehabilitates Jesus' family and disciples from their portrayal in Mark, making clear his own alliance to the gospel of the Jerusalem Church. Sim argues that when Mark's and Matthew's differences are taken into account properly, it is clear that Matthew deemed Mark inadequate, and wrote his Gospel with a mind for replacing his primary source and putting it out of use.²²

In 2014, Sim wrote a book chapter that looks at the portrayal of the family and disciples of Jesus in Paul and Mark.²³ He acknowledges recent discussions about Mark standing 'either in or very close to Pauline theological tradition', and aims to discuss their mutual treatment of the disciples and family of Jesus in order to strengthen this view of Mark.²⁴ After detailing Paul's difficult relationship with the Jerusalem Church, Sim highlights how soon Mark was written after

¹⁶ D. C. Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark: Did Matthew Intend to Supplement or to Replace His Primary Source?', *NTS* 57 (2011), 176-92.

¹⁷ Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 179-81.

¹⁸ Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 184.

¹⁹ Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 185.

²⁰ Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 185-86.

²¹ Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 186.

²² Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 187-88.

²³ D. C. Sim, 'The Family of Jesus and the Disciples of Jesus in Paul and Mark: Taking Sides in the Early Church's Factional Dispute', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 73-99.

²⁴ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 74-75

the death of Paul. He writes that if a Pauline was to write a Gospel, it would be expected to introduce Pauline ideas into the narrative, as well as delegitimise Paul's opponents; two criteria he argues Mark fulfils.²⁵ Turning to Jesus' family, Sim discusses their appearance in 3:19b-35, when they believe Jesus to be out of his mind, an accusation closely associated with demon possession.²⁶ In the final part of the pericope, Jesus' family ask to speak to him, and he ignores them saying that the disciples around him are his real family. This amounts to a rejection of his own family. Sim also briefly discusses Mark 6:1-6, where Jesus says that 'a prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house', a statement Sim argues is meant to refer not only to the townsfolk in Nazareth, but Jesus' own family.²⁷ Overall, Mark's portrayal of Jesus' family is damning; they show no understanding of Jesus, blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and Jesus rejects them outright. As such, Sim claims that Mark is trying to completely delegitimise the leadership of the early Jerusalem Church. In his portrayal, Mark was willing to go further in his criticism of the Jerusalem apostles than even Paul was.²⁸

Sim argues that this alignment with Paul is also seen in Mark's portrayal of The Twelve. While conceding that not all the stories about the disciples are negative, especially in the earlier parts of the Gospel, Sim writes that as the narrative continues towards Jerusalem, the disciples' inadequacy increases. This is particularly seen in their failure to understand Jesus (4:10, 13; 6:51-52; 8:29-32; 10:35-45).²⁹ This portrayal culminates in the prediction of the disciples' betrayal (14:17-21), their desertion of Jesus at his arrest (14:50), and Peter's three-fold denial (14:66-72). After Jesus' resurrection, the women who are told to carry the news to the disciples run away in fear, and tell no one what they saw (16:8). The disciples are thus never given leadership roles in the new church, but are instead left disgraced. Sim disagrees with the theory of pastoral reasons for this negative portrayal, instead arguing that Mark criticised the disciples of Jesus just as he did the family of Jesus.³⁰ These leaders did not understand Jesus' teaching, Paul did.³¹ Thus, overall, Sim writes that Mark's treatment of the disciples and Jesus' family demonstrates his alignment with the Pauline side of the early church division.

Sim has also been the central voice for a recent debate about the relationship between Matthew and Paul. In a number of publications over twenty years, he has argued that Matthew knew Pauline theology and would have been strongly opposed to it because of his different

²⁵ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 85.

²⁶ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 86-88.

²⁷ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 88-89.

²⁸ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 88-89.

²⁹ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 90-91.

³⁰ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 92-93.

³¹ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 93-94.

teaching on the Law.³² Sim argues that consequently there are hints within the Matthean Gospel that indicate that the evangelist was consciously trying to ‘counter the person, the theology, and the mission of Paul’.³³ Sim points to the trio of sayings on the Law in Matt. 5:17-19, the condemnation of the lawless (ἀνομία) in 7:21-23,³⁴ the parable of the tares in 13:24-30, 36-43, as well as Jesus’ affirmation of Peter in 16:17-19, and the great commission in 28:16-20.³⁵ In this way, Sim again paints Matthew as an active participant in the debate in the early church.

Sim has been one of the few scholars who have looked at the role of Matthew in the context of early church disputes in this much depth, though his work has not focused on Mark to the extent that it has on Matthew. Besides Sim’s work, there are only a few scholars who have drawn Mark and Matthew into earlier church debates about Gentiles and the Torah. Their treatment of Mark and Matthew is more even, but their discussions on the role of the Law in this debate are quite limited.

M. D. Goulder agrees that the Gospels need to be understood in light of the early church. This general argument is seen in a few of his works,³⁶ but is most clearly and comprehensively laid out in *A Tale of Two Missions*.³⁷ Goulder’s overall thesis in the book is that the early church comprised two distinct missions: a Petrine mission, initially led by Peter and the family and disciples of Jesus, and later led by James; and a Pauline mission, initially led by Paul, and going on to establish bases in Ephesus and eventually Europe.³⁸ Goulder argues that these two branches were almost entirely different in their beliefs and practices, and he details these differences throughout his book. As he details the differences between the two groups, he connects the canonical Gospels to either side of this division. He classifies Mark (and Luke and John) as Pauline, and Matthew as a ‘liberal Petrine’.³⁹ In relation to the Torah, Goulder writes that this issue was the starting point of trouble between the two parties, citing the Jerusalem Council and the Incident at Antioch.⁴⁰ He argues that the Petrines advocated that the Law was still in full effect,

³² See especially D. C. Sim, ‘Matthew’s Anti-Paulinism: A Neglected Feature of Matthean Studies,’ *HTS* 58 (2002), 767-83; D. C. Sim, ‘Conflict in the Canon: The Pauline Literature and the Gospel of Matthew,’ in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, ed. W. Mayer and B. Neil (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 71-86.

³³ D. C. Sim, ‘Matthew, Paul and the Origin of the Gentile Mission: The Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition,’ *HTS* 64 (2008), 377-92, 390.

³⁴ See especially D. C. Sim, ‘Matthew 7.21-23: Further Evidence of Its Anti-Pauline Perspective,’ *HTS* 53 (2007), 325-43.

³⁵ See especially Sim, ‘Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition,’ 377-90.

³⁶ M. D. Goulder, “‘Those Outside’ (Mk. 4:10-12),” *NovT* 33 (1991), 289-302; M. D. Goulder, ‘A Pauline in a Jacobite Church,’ in *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, ed. F. Van Segbroeck, C. M. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 859-75.

³⁷ M. D. Goulder, *A Tale of Two Missions* (London: SCM, 1994).

³⁸ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 6.

³⁹ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 12.

⁴⁰ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 1-3.

while the Pauline mission insisted it was no longer necessary.⁴¹ This same issue, he writes, was still prominent in the time of Ignatius of Antioch's letters.⁴²

Goulder first discusses the portrayal of the family of Jesus and Peter in each Gospel, and finds that Mark is critical of these figures (3:21-35; 6:1-6; 8:29-33), just as Paul was (2 Cor. 11:5, 13; 12:11; Gal. 2:6; Phil. 3:2). He also writes that Matthew amends these portrayals significantly (Matt. 12:46-50; 16:15-23). This tendency further confirms that Mark was a Pauline and Matthew was a Petrine.⁴³ In two small chapters, Goulder focuses on issues relating to the Torah. Firstly, he looks at the issue of certain food laws and the Sabbath, and outlines Paul's view of these issues. In the last pages he turns to the Gospels. He points to Mark's stories of Jesus eating with sinners (2:15-17), and dismissing food laws (7:19) and the Sabbath (2:23-28), and thus describes the Markan Jesus as a Pauline. Turning to Matthew, Goulder notes that the evangelist revises these scenarios in a Petrine way, adding details to the Sabbath story so that Jesus is not disregarding the holy day (Matt. 12:1-14), and leaving out Mark's comment that Jesus declared all foods clean (Matt. 15:1-20 cf. Mark 7:1-23).⁴⁴ In this way, the evangelists demonstrate their Pauline or Petrine heritage. Goulder then turns to circumcision and the issue of following the *whole* Law. He notes the Petrine tone of Matt. 5:17-19, and how it conflicts with the more rebellious Pauline approach.⁴⁵ He then goes on to list several aspects of the Pauline dilemma over the relevance of the Law. Firstly, discussing the strategy of dismissing the oral interpretations of the Law (1 Cor. 1-4; Col. 2:20-23; Eph. 2:15), and pointing out how Mark also takes up this line of argument (7:1-8). He also suggests that Paul's idea of love as fulfilment of the Law (Rom. 13:8-10) is seen in Mark's greatest commandments (12:28-34).⁴⁶ Goulder's overall premise of the early church tension being reflected in the Gospels is similar to Sim's and the one advocated in this study.

J. Svartvik has also contextualised Matthew and Mark in the early church in a 2008 book chapter.⁴⁷ The basic purpose of the piece was to emphasise how different Matthew was to his primary source, and Svartvik argues that Mark and Matthew are as different as Paul and James are often said to be. Svartvik makes his case in two key ways; by grouping Mark and Paul together and Matthew and James together, and by analysing Matthew's changes to Mark. Firstly Svartvik groups certain New Testament texts together into 'circles' by their 'theological affinities'.⁴⁸ He

⁴¹ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 31-38.

⁴² Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 4-6.

⁴³ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 8-23.

⁴⁴ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 29-30.

⁴⁵ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 32.

⁴⁶ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 31-38.

⁴⁷ J. Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. D. C. Sim and B. Repschinski (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 27-49.

⁴⁸ Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 28.

names a Johannine circle, a Lukan double work,⁴⁹ and then turns to Mark, who he claims belongs in another ‘circle’ with Paul, siding with more recent scholarship that Mark can be thought of as a Pauline Gospel. He then argues for this Mark-Paul connection; he highlights their shared importance of the cross, as well as a mutual lack of interest in Jesus’ teaching. He notes Mark’s critique of the Twelve and his interest in Gentiles, both of which he claims are Pauline tendencies.⁵⁰ He then notes that both Mark and Paul agree that Gentiles should not have to adhere to Jewish *halakhah*, calling this a mutual idea of ‘Christian commensality’. He cites 1 Cor. 7:17-24, where Paul is adamant that Christians are called in whatever condition they are in. Peter’s withdrawal and separation from the Gentiles at Antioch, Svartvik writes, is rightly seen as a sign of disapproval of Paul’s position. While denying that there was a historical connection between the evangelist and the apostle, he claims that Mark should be understood as a Pauline Gospel. As such, he claims Mark and Paul constitute another ‘circle’ within the New Testament canon.⁵¹ Turning to Matthew, Svartvik discusses the possibility of a connection between Matthew and the Epistle of James, noting the allusions to the Matthean tradition in the Epistle, saying that the author would not have explicitly quoted Matthew, as the Gospel was not yet Scripture. Svartvik also notes the similarities between the Epistle of James and the Sermon on the Mount. Overall, he concludes that Matthew and James can be described as another theological pair,⁵² bringing these two into tension with the Mark-Paul circle.

The second part of Svartvik’s article was to detail *how* Matthew changes Mark in his revision of the Gospel narrative. He categorises this revision into four key terms: rejudaisation, reinforcement, rebuke, and rehabilitation. Matthew rejudaises the Markan Jesus because he thought Mark’s presentation of Jesus was inaccurate, particularly in relation to his antinomianism. Svartvik writes that Matthew sought to rejudaise Jesus from the Markan/Pauline interpretation.⁵³ Svartvik then turns to Matthew’s reinforcement of *halakhic* observance. He notes that three of the most important religious behaviours were circumcision, sanctity of the Sabbath, and food laws. Circumcision is not explicitly discussed in the Gospel at all, but Matthew increases the importance of the Sabbath (24:20), and changes the antinomian attitude in Mark 7:1-23 (cf. Matt. 15:1-20) from one that dismisses all food laws, to one that is an ‘inner-*halakhic* discussion’ about hand washing. Torah is not being questioned, merely Pharisaic interpretation is.⁵⁴ Svartvik then describes Matthew’s increased rebuke against the Pharisees,⁵⁵ and he lastly discusses the rehabilitation of Peter in Matthew’s Gospel. Svartvik notes that Matthew rehabilitates many

⁴⁹ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 28-29.

⁵⁰ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 30-33.

⁵¹ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 30-34.

⁵² Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 36.

⁵³ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 36-37.

⁵⁴ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 37-41.

⁵⁵ Svartvik, ‘Matthew and Mark’, 41-43.

characters in Mark's Gospel including the family of Jesus, and the disciples, but he focuses on Peter, to whom Matthew draws specific attention. He particularly notes that Jesus' instructions to Peter to bind and loose (16:19) are an instruction to set up interpretations of the Torah. Svartvik concludes that Matthew needed to rehabilitate Peter because Matthew needed a more authoritative and credible figure than the Pharisees.⁵⁶

Concluding his article, Svartvik highlights how radical Matthew's rejudaisation of Jesus was; Matthew was going against the dominant Pauline/Markan tide of a Jesus who was taken out of his Jewish context. Svartvik notes that this is rarely noticed, and concludes that the friction between Mark and Matthew has failed to be recognised to the same extent as the friction that existed between James and Paul.

Aside from these detailed analyses, scholarship infrequently draws both Gospels into the events that defined the early church. Looking at scholarship for each Gospel individually, there is some more discussion on the Gospels and their relationship to the figures in the early church. J. Painter agrees that Mark and Matthew have different ideas of the Gentile mission, and argues that this is reflected in the early Church, but he does not comment on Matthew's position, just Mark's alignment with Paul.⁵⁷ U. Luz writes that Paul's mission was part of a broader Law-free effort that Stephen and the Hellenists started, and to which Mark also probably belonged. But despite mentioning this in his wider discussion of Matthew's view on the Law, he does not note the tension between Matthew and Mark on this issue.⁵⁸ M. F. Bird has written that Mark's Gospel can be considered both Petrine and Pauline, and was an early attempt to reconcile the two schools. Bird, however, does not specify what divided Peter and Paul in the first place, but he has drawn Mark into the early church history.⁵⁹ J. G. Crossley has suggested that Mark does not reflect any particular view on the Law and so proposes that it was written before controversies about the Law featured in the early church, thus suggesting a very early dating for Mark.⁶⁰ J. P. Meier has also looked at Matthew as a document composed in Antioch, and reflecting the inconsistent history the city had with the Law-free and Law-abiding gospels.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 43-45.

⁵⁷ J. Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 527-53, 537-44.

⁵⁸ U. Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, trans. R. Selle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 197.

⁵⁹ M. F. Bird, 'Mark: Interpreter of Peter and Disciple of Paul', in *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts and Convergences*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Willits (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 30-61, 52-53.

⁶⁰ J. G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity*, 1st ed. (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 82-124.

⁶¹ J. P. Meier, 'Antioch', in *Antioch and Rome*, ed. R. E. Brown and J. P. Meier (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 12-86, 45-72.

To some degree, the connection between Mark and the early church debates can be said to take form in the recent discussions on Mark's connection with Paul,⁶² but this is not usually done in light of *Paul's* conflict with his opponents. There are exceptions, but there is only limited connection to the early church; for example, J. Marcus, in the conclusion of his landmark article about Paul and Mark, briefly suggested that Paul and Mark shared a common negativity about Peter and Jesus' family,⁶³ but does not elaborate on this point. Unlike with Mark and Paul, few have drawn a connection between Matthew and the Jerusalem Church, even though the connection between Matthew and Peter is widely acknowledged. Aside from the work of Sim, Matthew's use of Mark in the specific context of early church disputes is largely untravelled terrain. Many scholars have looked in detail at Matthew's Christian-Jewish community,⁶⁴ or have looked at Matthew's redaction of Mark,⁶⁵ but few have studied this in relation to the discussion of the Law in the early church and in Mark. An exception to this trend is the recent debate led by Sim about whether Matthew was consciously anti-Pauline. This debate does frequently draw in Matthew's relationship to the early church.⁶⁶ Responding to Sim's claims, some scholars have looked at Matthew in relation to Paul's position in the early church. Notably, J. Willitts has argued that the two missions in the early church were largely complementary, could not be considered separate gospels, and were all under the leadership of the Jerusalem church.⁶⁷ As such, he argues that Matthew and Paul would not have had significant disagreements, though he does concede that taking the gospel to Gentiles would have had 'unique implications for Torah observance'.⁶⁸ Other than this debate on the anti-Paulinism of Matthew, Matthew's position in the early church is surprisingly rarely taken into account.

⁶² See especially J. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul,' *NTS* 46 (2000), 473-87; and also J. C. Fenton, 'Paul and Mark', in *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot*, ed. D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), 89-112; C. C. Black, 'Christ Crucified in Paul and in Mark: Reflections on an Intracanonical Conversation', in *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters*, ed. E. H. Lovering Jr. and J. L. Sumney (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 184-206; companion volumes *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014); *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014).

⁶³ Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 487.

⁶⁴ A. J. Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History: "Go Nowhere among the Gentiles" (Matt. 10:5b)* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988); J. A. Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990); A. J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); A. Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation in Matthew: The Narrative World of the First Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016).

⁶⁵ Especially A. M. O'Leary, *Matthew's Judaization of Mark: Examined in the Context of the Use of Sources in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), but also W. C. Allen, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1922; repr., 1922).

⁶⁶ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 776-81; Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition', 379.

⁶⁷ J. Willitts, 'The Friendship of Matthew and Paul: A Response to a Recent Trend in the Interpretation of Matthew's Gospel,' *HTS* 65 (2009), 150-57.

⁶⁸ Willitts, 'Friendship', 151.

A closer look at the literature has thus revealed that previous studies have not examined both Mark and Matthew in detail in the context of earlier church debates about the Torah for Gentiles. The principle of drawing the Gospels into the earlier church is a commonly accepted premise, but all research has been limited in some aspect. The general scenario which Sim has defended is sound; he has brought Matthew (and Mark) into the early church debate, pin-pointed the Law as a central cause of division in the church, aligned Matthew with the Law-abiding side of the debate, and aligned Mark with the Law-free side. In this way, Sim's view correlates with the one advocated in this study. But Sim has not focused on the second Gospel. While he has brought Mark into the early church debate, he has not looked at the second evangelist in close detail, especially on the topic of the Law, and Mark's position on this topic deserves to be looked at more closely. Similarly, the general picture Goulder provides is valuable, and does paint a picture of the division in the church that continues into the Gospel era. But Goulder does not structure his study as a focus on the Gospels; they are only mentioned briefly in the discussion of each subject, and they are a small part of a large picture he draws. *A Tale of Two Missions* also lacks detail, and the promised 800-page academic volume detailing his hypothesis in more detail never came to be written.⁶⁹ And while Svartvik recognises the connection between Mark and Matthew and the early church, draws attention to the tension between Mark and Matthew over the issue of the Law, and says that Mark was Pauline, he does not draw Matthew into the early church debate. He connects Matthew to the Epistle of James, but he does not explicitly connect this text with any of important streams of the early church. The closest he comes to this is when he writes that the theology in the Epistle can be considered one of the earliest forms of Christianity.⁷⁰ But, as with Sim and Goulder, the general gist of Svartvik's contribution is sound.

Existing scholarship, then, does not have a detailed and full-scale analysis of both Mark and Matthew in this particular context, and this is the gap in the literature that the present study aims to fill. There is a need to look at these Gospels together in this framework in order to gain a broader picture of the early church on this issue. The focus on both Mark and Matthew is significant because they adhered to different sides of the debate and so a single study on both provides a comprehensive view of how this issue affected different communities in the early church. This study will also be the first to look at the separate questions of Mark and Paul and Matthew and Paul together in the same work, and both in the larger context of the early church. Studying these specific aspects of the first century church together has not been done in detail before now. The research conducted here will be the first full-scale study of Mark and Matthew that seeks to fully place the evangelists in the context of the debates surrounding the Torah and Gentiles. Such a project will allow for a comprehensive treatment of these parties in order to gain a

⁶⁹ Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, xi.

⁷⁰ Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 36.

more complete picture of the role, extent, and impact of this early debate in the second and third generations of the early church.

Methodology

The chosen method for this historical reconstruction of the early church and the historical contexts of the Markan and Matthean communities is the historical critical method. This method has been traced back to the Enlightenment, although some trace the origins to the Reformation.⁷¹ The basic view of this method is that all historical writings, including those found in the biblical canon, come from a definite historical and literary context,⁷² and the basic aim of historical-critical analysis is to find the original meaning of the original author in their original historical context.⁷³ Historical criticism obviously consists of many sub-methodologies (e.g. textual criticism, redaction criticism, form criticism), but the basic shared ideology between all of these is that the biblical texts need to be interpreted in their unique historical contexts. This method is not just limited to analysis of these texts, but also uses these ancient texts to study general history, and attempt to rebuild the history of the ancient authors.⁷⁴

This method of biblical analysis is applied throughout this study, and many different aspects are utilised in order to gain a full picture of debates and differences in the early church. The topic of the study itself is a historical-critical inquiry because it is seeking to reconstruct an aspect of the historical context of the Gospels that is infrequently taken into account. The method is also useful for analysing the evangelists' positions on the issues at hand. Neither Mark nor Matthew has Jesus make an explicit statement about the nature of the Gentile mission in relation to the Torah. Neither Mark nor Matthew wrote an instructional discourse on the Law, or on Gentiles. The evangelists wrote a narrative about Jesus the Messiah, and as such, a systematic explanation of the either evangelist's theology of the Law and Gentiles should not be expected from these documents. Instead, historical critical analysis enables study of the narrative and stories and actions within the Gospels in a way that can unearth what the attitude and opinion of each evangelist may have been, even in the absence of explicit statements.

Further to the broad brush of historical critical methodology, different aspects of the thesis take into account more specific approaches to biblical interpretation. These different approaches are described in the introductions of each chapter.

⁷¹ On this debate see D. R. Law, *The Historical-Critical Method* (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 25-26.

⁷² J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Interpretation of Scripture: In Defence of the Historical-Critical Method* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008), 64.

⁷³ R. N. Soulen and R. K. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, Fourth ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 89.

⁷⁴ Soulen and Soulen, *Biblical Criticism*, 89.

Clarification of Terms and Concepts

The terrain of this topic is filled with loaded and inaccurate terminology, and so it is essential to clarify intentions and acknowledge flaws in the wording employed here. Firstly, it is necessary to establish what ‘Law-free’ means. Such a term does not exist in the New Testament texts, but has been applied later by commentators. In this study, the term ‘Law-free’ is used to mean a general attitude that, for Gentiles, the ritualistic aspects of the Torah are not important after the Christ event. This includes such aspects of the Torah as circumcision, food laws, and the Sabbath. That ‘Law-free’ is a problematic term to describe this attitude is evident; for example, though Paul was adamant that Gentiles should not have to follow certain Jewish practices, he still demanded exclusivity of worship and a morality that was thoroughly Jewish (e.g. Rom. 13:9-10; 1 Cor. 7:19).⁷⁵ In light of this, ‘ritualistically Torah free’ might be the most technically correct expression, but it is a cumbersome term. As such, despite its flaws and inaccuracies, the common ‘Law-free’ terminology will be used, with full acknowledgement of its complications and inaccuracies. In opposition to this term, the phrase ‘Law-abiding’ is being used to describe followers of the Jesus movement who believed Gentiles should abide by these ritualistic demands of the Torah.

Very often in these debates, the terms ‘Gentile Christian’ and ‘Jewish Christian’ (or ‘Christian Jew’) are used to distinguish between those who were Law-free and those who were Law-abiding. Jewish Christianity (or Christian Judaism) typically refers to those in the early Christian movement who were Jewish, who believed in the Messiahship of Christ, and who believed such a belief did not and should not contradict with their Jewish tradition. Such Christianity was practised entirely within the bounds of Second Temple Judaism, and so adherents still practised all ritual aspects of the Law. Gentile Christians, on the other hand, were Gentile believers in the significance of Christ, who did not adhere to ritualistic aspects of the Jewish tradition. Such distinctions are incredibly relevant here, and useful to a point, but they are limited. The terms are essentially ethnic categorisations, which do not fully represent the complexity of the ethnic composition of the early church. As such, they are largely not employed in this study, giving way to the simpler designations of ‘Law-free’ and ‘Law-abiding’. Sometimes the terms Gentile Christian and Christian Jew are used here descriptively – so to describe a Christian who is a Jew, or a Christian who is a Gentile – but they are not used to categorise the early church into different groups.

⁷⁵ On this see especially P. Fredriksen, ‘Why Should a “Law-Free” Mission Mean a “Law-Free” Apostle?’, *JBL* 134 (2015), 637-50. M. F. Bird aptly describes Paul’s gospel as ‘proselytism-free’. Bird, ‘Mark’, 48.

Finally, again for convenience's sake, the terms 'Christian' and 'church' are used throughout the entire study, with full acknowledgement that they are 'inadequate, anachronistic, and misleading'⁷⁶. In this study, the term 'Christian' is employed to refer to anyone, Gentile or Jew, who believed in the significance of Jesus Christ. While it is evident that neither Paul nor the evangelists would have identified themselves as Χριστιανός,⁷⁷ and while the term 'Christian' as it is used in English has a lot of baggage and implications that the original term did not have, it is still the simplest term to employ for this purpose.⁷⁸ Similarly, the term 'church' carries with it centuries of use which typically denote a physical building or an official organisation within Christendom, neither of which are relevant to a first century context. When used in this study, 'church' only refers to the groups in which such Christians could be categorised; broadly (as in the entire first century church), or more specifically (the church at Corinth). So while there was no uniformly 'Christian' movement, much less a single 'church', these are convenient terms used throughout the discussion for the sake of simplicity.

Gospel Locations

This study does not rely on specific locations for either Gospel, but it is nevertheless important to touch on different ideas about the possible geographical locations of the evangelists. While R. Bauckham has called into question scholarly ideas of a single audience for the Gospels,⁷⁹ there are still hints within each text that can reveal its potential geographic origins.⁸⁰

As with all the Gospels, there is no explicit indication in Mark as to where it may have been composed, but there are some features of the narrative that can be used to theorise about the possibilities. Mark's frequent explanations of Jewish practices (2:19; 7:3-4; 10:2; 14:1.12, 64; 15:42)⁸¹ and anti-Jewish sentiments (12:1-12) indicate that his Gospel was written for Gentiles, and thus probably written by a Gentile as well. As such, it is likely to have been written in a predominantly Gentile city. Mark's Gospel also contains consistent warnings about present and future suffering (especially Mark 13, but also 8:34-38; 9:42-48; 10:17-31, 38-39; 13:1-37), and

⁷⁶ A. Runesson, 'The Question of Terminology: The Architecture of Contemporary Discussions on Paul', in *Paul within Judaism*, ed. M. D. Nanos and M. Zetterholm (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 53-77, 55.

⁷⁷ Luke does use this word in Acts 11:26; 26:28.

⁷⁸ For a discussion on how such terminology reinforces modern assumptions, see Runesson, 'Question of Terminology', 53-77.

⁷⁹ R. Bauckham, 'For Whom Were the Gospels Written?', in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audience*, ed. R. Bauckham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 9-48.

⁸⁰ A. Runesson too makes this point; 'As with all texts, local circumstances and conditions would consciously or unconsciously but necessarily have made their way... into the written product'. A. Runesson, 'Behind the Gospel of Matthew: Radical Pharisees in Post-War Galilee?', *CurTM* 37 (2010), 460-71, 461.

⁸¹ M. E. Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 16.

interpretation of what historical events these warnings are referring to play a large part in determining where the Gospel may have been written.

A popular suggestion for Mark's provenance is Rome.⁸² This is also an ancient suggestion, as a Roman location is implied in Papias' testimony, interpreted explicitly as such by Clement (cited in Eusebius, *H. E.* 6:14), and echoed in the writings of following church fathers.⁸³ This is also supported by the Gospel's traditional association with Peter, who, tradition also has it, was martyred in Rome. Latinisms in Mark could indicate that it was written where Latin was used,⁸⁴ though this argument has lately been questioned as use of Latinisms in itself does not necessarily indicate a Roman location, but could merely be the result of the spreading influence of Rome throughout the empire.⁸⁵ Some smaller indications of a Roman authorship are present also. For example, the specific coinage mentioned and explained in 12:42 was not circulated in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire,⁸⁶ and the mention of Rufus in Mark 15:21, matches with the only other mention of this name in the New Testament in Paul's letter to the church in Rome, where Paul sends his greetings to him (Rom. 16:13). In theories of a Roman provenance, Mark's warnings about persecution are thought to reflect the persecutions of the Roman Christians inflicted by the Emperor Nero (Tacitus, *Ann.* 15:44).⁸⁷

In contrast to this, some scholars argue that Mark's apocalyptic warnings are in response not to the Neronian persecutions but to the Jewish War.⁸⁸ In such interpretations, locations in Palestine and Syria are most frequently put forward. While Mark can make sense in a Palestinian context,⁸⁹ there are some objections to this location. A Palestinian provenance is often dismissed because of Mark's mistakes about Palestinian geography (e.g. 7:31; see also 5:1; 6:45; 7:31; 8:22; 10:1; 11:1),⁹⁰ Mark's translation of all the Aramaic words he uses (3:17; 5:41; 7:34; 15:34),⁹¹ as

⁸² Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 488-91; R. E. Brown, 'Rome', in *Antioch and Rome*, ed. R. E. Brown and J. P. Meier (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 87-216, 197; M. Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1985), 28; J. R. Donahue, 'Windows and Mirrors: The Setting of Mark's Gospel,' *CBQ* 57 (1995), 1-26, 20. More tentatively on Mark's Roman origins; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 41; B. J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 2.

⁸³ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 488, 97; France, *Mark*, 37.

⁸⁴ 'Centurion' (κεντυρίων) in 15:39; 'Legion' (Λεγιών) in 5:9, 5; 'Denarius' (δηνάριον) in 6:37. See P. J. Achtemeier, 'Mark, Gospel Of', in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (Garden City: Doubleday, 1992), 541-57, 541.

⁸⁵ M. D. Hooker, *The Gospel According to St Mark* (London: A&C Black, 1991), 7; France, *Mark*, 40.

⁸⁶ Brown, 'Rome', 196; Hengel, *Mark*, 29.

⁸⁷ For example see Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 20-23.

⁸⁸ J. Painter, *Mark's Gospel* (London: Routledge, 1997), 7; J. Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 2000), 33-34; Dunn, *Neither Jew nor Greek*, 56.

⁸⁹ So say Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 7; H. N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in Its Historical and Social Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 237.

⁹⁰ Boring, *Mark*, 19.

well as his explanation of Jewish customs, and a lack of strong evidence for a significant Christian community in Galilee in the first century.⁹² Because of the weaknesses of a Palestinian location, those who see the Jewish War reflected in Mark's Gospel often turn to Syria.⁹³ A Syrian origin means that the context for Mark would have been predominantly Gentile but still geographically close enough to have enough experience of the Jewish War.⁹⁴ But ultimately, the scarcity of the evidence means that there is no sure answer to the question of Mark's origins. As M. D. Hooker puts it, the most that can be said is that Mark was written somewhere in the Roman Empire.⁹⁵

As in Mark, there are some aspects of Matthew's Gospel that could give clues as to its place of origin. The Jewishness of Matthew is widely acknowledged, and seen in his frequent allusions to and citations from Hebrew Scripture, his insistence on keeping the whole Jewish Law (5:17-19; 23:23), and his parallels with characters from the Hebrew Scriptures.⁹⁶ Matthew's use of Greek indicates that it likely had a Diaspora origin, and the location would have needed to have a large enough Jewish population in order to contain two different rival Jewish groups; those from Matthew's community and those from Formative Judaism.⁹⁷

In Matthean scholarship, there are two locations that are most commonly suggested for Matthew's origin. The most popular is the region of Syria, frequently the city of Antioch on the Orontes, the provincial capital, which was a considerable urban centre in the first century. This theory was most famously put forward by B. H. Streeter,⁹⁸ and has gained considerable support since.⁹⁹ A key argument for this theory is Matthew's increased attention to and reverence of Peter, who stayed in Antioch after Paul's departure (Gal. 2:11-14).¹⁰⁰ The later tradition of Peter as the bishop of Antioch also attests to Peter's prolonged presence in that city.¹⁰¹ Later Antiochene figures also seem to have some familiarity with Matthew, particularly Ignatius the later bishop of

⁹¹ Achtemeier, 'Mark', 543.

⁹² A. Y. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 101.

⁹³ H. C. Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (London: SCM, 1977), 100-05; G. Thiessen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. L. M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 290-93; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 33-37.

⁹⁴ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 36.

⁹⁵ Hooker, *Mark*, 7-8.

⁹⁶ See D. C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); L. Huizenga, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

⁹⁷ D. J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 9.

⁹⁸ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 500-23.

⁹⁹ Some of the loudest proponents of this theory since then include Meier, 'Antioch', 22-27; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 53-62. Some hold this view more tentatively. For example, U. Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, trans. J. E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 57-58; C. A. Evans, *Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5-6.

¹⁰⁰ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 503-04; Meier, 'Antioch', 23-24; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 58-59.

¹⁰¹ See Eusebius, *H.E.* 3:22.

the city,¹⁰² and there are also some perceived links between Matthew and the Didache, which itself has links to Syria.¹⁰³ Some smaller indications could also suggest an Antiochene provenance, such as Matthew's addition of Jesus' word spreading through Syria in Matt. 4:24 (cf. Mark 3:6-7).¹⁰⁴

The most popular alternative theory is that Matthew was written in the region of Galilee. This theory is related to an ancient one that had Matthew written in Judea, itself originally influenced by Papias' testimony that Matthew's Gospel was originally written in Hebrew,¹⁰⁵ later supported by other early church figures,¹⁰⁶ and experiencing support by an increasing number of modern scholars.¹⁰⁷ A key argument is that Matthew's severe conflict with the Formative Judaism makes more sense in a setting where the group was prominent, in this case, in Galilee, where Pharisees emerged after the Jewish War.¹⁰⁸ Further, it is argued that the Matthean Jesus' ministry is quite focused on Galilee, and so a Galilean provenance could explain this focus.¹⁰⁹ But the Galilee hypothesis has been contested on a number of reasonable grounds,¹¹⁰ and thus, as with Mark, there is ultimately no certain answer as to Matthean provenance.

Plan of the study

This study will look at how the debates over Gentiles and the Law can be seen the Christian first century. It is a focused discussion on the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, but before turning to these texts, it will be necessary to establish the precise nature of the debate in the early church and sketch a picture of the different sides of the controversy. In the first chapter, it will be seen that from early on in the church's history that there were different views on the Law held by the Hellenists and the Hebrews. These two groups eventually differed on the relevance of the Law for Gentiles, and it was the Hellenists who took the critical move, and started preaching a Law-free gospel to the Gentiles from their base in Antioch, with the later assistance of the recently converted Paul. In

¹⁰² *Smyrn.* 1.1 cf. Matt. 3:15; *Polycarp.* 1:2-3 cf. Matt. 8:17; *Polycarp.* 2:2 cf. Matt. 10:16; *Eph.* 5:2 cf. Matt. 18:19-20. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 504-07.

¹⁰³ Did. 8:1 cf. Matt. 6:5-16; Did. 11:3-4 cf. Matt. 10:40; Did. 11:7 cf. Matt. 12:31; Did. 8:1 cf. Matt. 10:10; Did. 14:2 cf. Matt. 5:24; Did. 15:3 cf. Matt. 18:15; Did. 16 cf. Matt. 24:10-30). Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 507-11.

¹⁰⁴ Evans, *Matthew*, 5. Some have even defended an Antiochene provenance by drawing on Antioch's complex history about the Law and the Gentile mission (Gal. 2:11-14); Meier, 'Antioch', 22-23; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 53-62.

¹⁰⁵ Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.15-16. See Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 500.

¹⁰⁶ Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1; Jerome *Der Vir III* 3.

¹⁰⁷ A central proponent is J. A. Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel According to Matthew* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1996), 16-19. See also Harrington, *Matthew*, 10; A. J. Saldarini, 'The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict in the Galilee', in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine (New York: Harvard University Press, 1992), 23-38, 26-27; Runesson, 'Radical Pharisees', 462.

¹⁰⁸ Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 158.

¹⁰⁹ Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 159.

¹¹⁰ D. C. Sim, 'The Gospel of Matthew and Galilee: An Evaluation of an Emerging Hypothesis,' *ZNW* 107 (2016), 141-69, 155-59.

contrast, the Hebrews, which included the disciples and family of Jesus, continued to live their gospel within the boundaries of Judaism. In reaction to the Antiochene Law-free gospel, the Jerusalem disciples called a council at Jerusalem in order to discuss the issue. The accounts of this council by Luke and Paul are heavily biased, but the topic up for debate is certain; did Gentile converts to the gospel need to be circumcised and follow the Torah? Both Luke and Paul (notably, both Law-free authors) claim that the decision was settled in Paul's favour, but there is ample evidence following the Council that suggests that the issue was not actually resolved there. Disputes at Antioch, Galatia, and possibly also Corinth and Philippi testify that there were still Law-abiding Christians actively promoting a Law-abiding gospel in Law-free churches.

Whether these opponents were aligned with the Jerusalem apostles, namely James and Peter, is possible. While it seems clear that at the Council and the Incident at Antioch Peter and James were in favour of a Law-abiding mission, there is no strong evidence to link them to the later anti-Pauline missions in Galatia. But whether or not the disciples were actively involved in these later Judaising efforts, it is clear that there continued to be two views on Gentiles and the Law, and these parallel schools continued to exist into the Gospel era. Testimony from the Pastoral letters, arguments that Acts was a defence of Paul, analysis of the letter of James, and evidence from Ignatius of Antioch further demonstrate that these general issues were still around during and after the composition of the Gospels.

The remainder of the study will focus on the Gospels. The second chapter will discuss Mark's Gospel, which was written shortly after the deaths of James and Paul. Mark's treatment of the issues of the Gentile mission and the Law place him firmly on the Law-free side of the debate. The Markan Jesus makes efforts to preach a Law-free gospel to the Gentiles, and this is seen in several ways. Firstly, the Markan Jesus makes travels to Jewish *and* Gentile areas around the Sea of Galilee, and these are treated as separate areas and mission fields. Notably, as the story progresses, Jesus spends less time on Jewish territory, and more time on Gentile territory, possibly indicating that the Gentile mission was more important to Jesus. His reception in Jewish land is also increasingly negative (3:20-21; 6:1-6), and provides a stark contrast with the largely positive reception he receives in Gentile territories (5:18-20; 7:24, 31-37). Secondly, Mark more explicitly promotes a Law-free Gentile mission through a series of stories where Jesus opens up his ministry to the Gentiles. The most important in these stories is Jesus' encounter with a Syrophoenician woman (7:24-30), a story with a clear message about serving Gentiles. The second story is Jesus' feeding of the four-thousand-strong crowd (8:1-10); the previous feeding of the five thousand (6:30-44) had taken place in Jewish territory, and this second feeding takes place in Gentile territory (7:31), symbolising that the Gentile world was fully in communion with his ministry. In all of his dealings with Gentiles, it is important to note that the Markan Jesus did not ask the

Gentiles to accept the Torah. Jesus' mission is truly a mission to Gentiles *as they are*, and not a mission to convert Gentiles to Judaism. This is evident in the third way Mark promotes a Law-free Gentile mission, by actively lowering the importance of the Torah. The strongest example of this is in 7:1-23, where Jesus is in dispute with the Pharisees over the importance of hand washing, and after the dispute, Jesus turns to the crowd and announces that 'there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile' (7:15). The dismissal of the Law peaks with Mark's own conclusion of the story that Jesus purified all foods (7:19). Such a Law-free attitude is also seen in Mark's Sabbath controversies (2:18-3:5), and in other parts of the Markan Jesus' teaching (10:2-9; 12:28-34). It will thus be seen that on the key issue of Gentile obedience to the Law, Mark's Gospel reflects the Law-free perspective in the early church.

Matthew's Gospel, on the other hand, is conservative when it comes to general obedience to the Law and this will be the focus of chapter three. The most significant passage for Matthew and the Law is 5:17-19, where Jesus explicitly commands adherence to the whole Law, thus making clear that Matthew promotes a Law-abiding gospel. This attitude is seen throughout the Gospel. Jesus' interactions during his ministry are often about the topic of the Law and doing God's will (7:12-14, 21; 12:2-12, 50; 22:17-46), and even in his disputes with the Pharisees Jesus never dismisses the Law, only condemns the Pharisees for not observing it stringently enough (5:20), or for their merciless interpretation of it (12:1-8; 23:23). The importance of the Torah for Matthean theology is also seen in the overarching themes surrounding the coming judgement; the Law is explicitly tied in with teaching about entering the Kingdom of Heaven (5:19; 19:16-19), and can also be seen in Matthew's repeated themes of righteousness (5:20; 6:33; 7:19-23; 10:14-15; 12:33-37; 25:31-46) and being judged by one's fruits (3:8; 7:15-20; 12:33; 21:43). The Torah in Matthew is thus crucially tied in with the theme of judgement, and as such the Law is an essential part of the moral framework for the Matthean community. A more conservative attitude towards the Law is also seen in Matthew's amendments to Markan passages on the topic. Amongst other changes (Matt. 12:1-8 cf. Mark 2:23-28; Matt. 22:34-40 cf. Mark 12:28-34) his adjustment of Mark 7:1-23 subtly changes the discussion to make the entire exchange only about the Pharisaic tradition of hand washing (15:1-20) rather than about the irrelevance of food laws, and most tellingly, he eliminates Mark's conclusion that Jesus declared all foods clean. The Matthean Jesus is thus generally more Law-abiding than his primary source portrays.

Matthew's relationship to the Gentile mission is complex, but despite Matthew's early hesitations about a Gentile mission (10:5-6; 15:24), Jesus' words in 28:16-20 indicate that the Matthean Jesus ultimately instructed a mission to the nations. This passage does not contain an explicit order to continue obeying the Law, but in light of Matthew's complete commitment to it throughout his Gospel, nothing in 28:16-20, or the events that preceded it, warrants a nullification

of the Torah. Matthew's great commission to the nations is thus best seen as an extension of the same gospel that the Matthean Jesus has been preaching his entire ministry; the good news was finally now being opened to the Gentiles. Matthew thus cleanly aligns with the Law-abiding perspective of the early church; he believed in the enduring validity and utmost importance of the Law in light of Christ's death and resurrection, and he subsequently supported a Law-observant Gentile mission that sought to bring them to Christ by conversion to Judaism. And importantly, he did all this while relying on a source that held the opposite views – these were intentional thematic changes that Matthew made to his source. Matthew had turned Mark's Jesus into a more Jewish figure, whose entire message was now at home within a Law-abiding gospel.

In the fourth chapter, the discussion will turn to how each Gospel portrays the disciples and family of Jesus, figures who were actively involved in the debates in the early church. The foolishness of the disciples in Mark has been well attested in modern scholarship. The disciples start off in a positive light (1:16-20), but as the narrative progresses, they show themselves to be inadequate for the role to which Jesus has called them. They misunderstand him frequently (4:13; 6:51-52; 8:32; 9:31-32; 10:35-45), are resistant to his teaching (4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:4), and wind up deserting Jesus at the culmination of his earthly ministry (14:50). Mark's picture of the disciples is too unsympathetic to be motivated by only pastoral purposes, and so the more likely explanation is that Mark portrayed these figures so negatively for polemical purposes. That the portrait of the disciples in Mark has a polemical purpose is further supported by Mark's portrait of Jesus' family. Jesus' relatives are only featured in two stories (3:19-35; 6:1-6), but each story gives a distinctly negative impression. In the first, the Markan Jesus indirectly accuses his family of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (3:28-30 cf. 3:19-20), the one unforgivable sin. Jesus also rejects his relatives, saying that his followers are his real family (3:33-35). In the second, Jesus returns to his hometown of Nazareth where he says that prophets are not recognised by their own town, even by their own family (6:1-6). Jesus' relatives actually come off worse in Mark's Gospel than do the bumbling but arguably well meaning disciples. No members of his family play any role in Jesus' earthly ministry; Jesus cannot even perform miracles around them (6:5). Given the leadership role these people occupied in the decades after Jesus' death, Mark's portrayal of Jesus' family is significant and almost condemning. Given the context of the early church, it is likely that Mark's portrayal of these figures is linked to their opposition to a Law-free gospel, and that Mark is using his narrative to criticise the disciples who were linked to a Law-abiding gospel and who held authoritative positions in the Jerusalem Church.

Matthew significantly rehabilitates the disciples and Jesus' family in his Gospel. He still portrays the Twelve as flawed, but edits Markan stories to make the disciples and Jesus' family seem more worthy. In Matthew, the disciples are given key responsibility in the future church

(16:17-19; 18:18), the eschaton (19:28), and are officially commissioned for the mission to the nations (28:19). The disciples in Matthew are not without fault, but Matthew consciously portrays these characters in a more positive light (Mark 6:51-52 cf. Matt. 14:33), concluding with a resurrection narrative where the disciples' relationship to Jesus is restored (28:16-20). Likewise, Matthew edits the stories featuring Jesus' family quite heavily, eliminating the Markan accusation that Jesus was mad, and rearranging the Markan text to remove the implication that Jesus' family were blasphemous and guilty of the unforgivable sin (Matt. 12:24-32, 46-50 cf. Mark 3:19-35). Also of importance is Matthew's inclusion of an infancy narrative, where the mother of Jesus is depicted favourably as the virgin prophesied by Isaiah who conceived and bore the Messiah (1:18-25). In the portrayal of the disciples and family of Jesus, Matthew has once again consciously amended Mark's efforts, and portrayed Jesus' disciples and family, the leaders of the Law-abiding tradition, as authorised and credible leaders of the movement. These aspects of Mark and Matthew bring the Gospels further into the early church context, and this fourth chapter will demonstrate that Mark and Matthew were not on either side of the debate merely by virtue of their theology, but in how they viewed the leaders of the Law-abiding tradition.

The fifth and final chapter of the study will turn to current debates about the relationship between each of the evangelists and the apostle Paul to see how this wider church context can shed light on these questions. Paul and Mark share a lot of similar theological ideas, and so the discussion over whether Mark was in some way dependent on or influenced by Paul's teaching has been a contested topic for nearly a century. It is often cited that the two canonical authors share a vast number of ideas including a focus on the cross and a mutual lack of interest in the content of Jesus' teaching. These frequently cited ideas, however, are not the strongest evidence for a Mark-Paul connection. Instead, their more controversial points of similarity will be explored; their Law-free gospels, and their shared negative view of the disciples in Jerusalem. However, it will be seen that despite their commonality on these topics, there is no specifically Pauline theology evident in any of Mark's discussion of these topics. While it is possible that Mark knew distinctively Pauline theology, and while in the context of the early church Mark definitely stood closer to Paul, there is no direct evidence that makes a Pauline influence on Mark likely.

There is also an ongoing debate about the connection between Matthew and Paul. D. C. Sim has written several articles on this topic specifically, where he claims that Matthew would have known Pauline theology in some form, and that various passages in Matthew's Gospel were thus intended as anti-Pauline rhetoric (e.g. 5:17-19; 16:17-19; 28:16-20). However, as with Mark, there is no direct evidence that these passages were directed at a specifically Pauline theology as opposed to a general Law-free theology, and so claims of conscious anti-Paulinism go beyond the available evidence. While it is possible that Matthew had intended these passages as anti-Pauline

sentiments, there is no strong evidence that this was the case. This final chapter will demonstrate that although Paul is a large figure in the New Testament, the Law-free movement was bigger than his missionary efforts. There were non-Pauline Law-free communities that testify to the scope of the Law-free tradition beyond the apostle. As such, the Law-free theology of Mark, and Matthew's criticisms of a Law-free position to not themselves indicate a specifically Pauline impact on either Gospel.

Overall, this study will demonstrate that Matthew and Mark were composed in the aftermath of the unresolved debate between the Law-free and Law-abiding gospels. It will be seen that there were two different opinions on the issues of Gentiles and the Law; Mark's Gospel fits in with the Law-free side of the issue, whereas Matthew's stance on the same subjects fits in more readily with the Law-abiding view. This study will demonstrate that the evangelists were not immune from the debates over Gentile obedience to the Torah in the early church, but actively reflected them in their Gospels.

Chapter 1: The Early Church

For the most part, the New Testament is a collection of Law-free documents. The scarcity of surviving Law-abiding Christian texts in the canon makes the presence and influence of the Law-abiding tradition in the early church easy to miss. This chapter sets out to review these Law-free documents with a critical eye for evidence of alternative perspectives of Gentile practice of the Torah, and it will be seen that from very early on, there were disputes over this issue. Moreover, these disparate outlooks were at no point consolidated, but existed alongside each other throughout the first century. These differing views can be traced through the first three decades of the earliest church, existing beyond the deaths of Paul, James, and Peter, and continuing into the dawn of the Gospel era and into the second century.

Scholarship is largely in agreement that the first century church did not agree on the issue of Gentiles and adherence to the Torah. While there has been long-running debate about the unity or otherwise of the earliest church, even those who maintain a general church harmony concede that the question of Gentiles and the Law was at one point a cause of significant contention.¹¹¹ Unlike what is often claimed, however, these differences were not resolved at the Jerusalem Council, though it was called to specifically address the issue. Differing opinions persisted, and continued to be a source of disagreement. Such a position has been argued before,¹¹² and this chapter is an important foundation for the main proposition of the study.

While it is accepted that Paul was a central proponent of the ‘Law-free’ Gentile mission,¹¹³ the identity of those who advocated that Gentiles should abide the Law is more contentious. Some

¹¹¹ For example, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 129-32; Meier, ‘Antioch’, 36-44; C. C. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division within the Earliest Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 114; E. J. Schnabel, ‘Jesus and the Beginnings of the Mission to the Gentiles’, in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*, ed. J. B. Green and M. Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 37-58, 41-43; R. Bauckham, ‘James, Peter, and the Gentiles’, in *The Missions of James, Peter, and Paul: Tensions in Early Christianity*, ed. B. D. Chilton and C. Evans (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 91-42, 139; M. Zetterholm, ‘The Didache, Matthew, James – and Paul: Reconstructing Historical Developments in Antioch’, in *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Setting*, ed. H. van de Sandt and J. K. Zangenberg (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 73-90, 90; C. Bennema, ‘The Ethnic Conflict in Early Christianity: An Appraisal of Bauckham’s Proposal on the Antioch Crisis and the Jerusalem Council,’ *JETS* 56 (2013), 753-63.

¹¹² Some key proponents of a continued debate (with varying ideas of how divided the early church was): Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 44-152; and more recently Meier, ‘Antioch’, 36-44; J. L. Martyn, ‘A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles: The Background of Galatians,’ *SJT* 38 (1985), 307-24, Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, ; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 63-106, 165-214; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 660-834; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaisers*, 81-222.

¹¹³ A position recently put forward by M. D. Nanos and M. Zetterholm tries to reclaim Paul for Judaism, arguing that Paul continued to follow the Law. As uncertain as this premise seems to be (cf. Rom. 6:1-23; 7:6; 10:4; 1 Cor. 9:20-21; Gal. 2:19; 5:11, 18; Phil. 3:8), Nanos and Zetterholm do not dispute that Paul thought that the Gentiles should not follow the Law, and so their position does not challenge the larger

argue that the Jerusalem apostles, notably James and Peter, held that Gentiles should follow the Law,¹¹⁴ while others see this Law-abiding stance as belonging to a separate conservative minority in Jerusalem.¹¹⁵ This chapter will seek to clarify this question. While it is more likely that James and Peter advocated a Law-abiding gospel for the Gentiles (and the bigger picture of this study supports this), the study does not stand or fall on their identity as such.

The two major biblical sources for this analysis are the genuine letters of Paul and Luke's Acts of the Apostles, and each of these has their own problems in reliability. There are several issues in using Acts as a historical source; for example, it was written several decades after the events it recounts, and so all of its sources must be secondary at least. But the most significant hurdle in using Acts for this study is the author's tendency to see church history through rose-coloured glasses. While Acts provides a clear chronological narrative of the earliest church, it is widely acknowledged that one of Luke's central objectives was to portray the church as being constantly guided by God through the Holy Spirit, and as a result, it can be said that he had an agenda to portray the church as ecclesiastically unified.¹¹⁶ Acts expresses this harmony by having all developments of the church remaining under the control and authority of the Holy Spirit and the Twelve; he does this by explicitly designating authority from the Holy Spirit to the disciples (2:1-4), then by highlighting that all actions and developments were overseen by the disciples (e.g. 1:26; 2:42; 6:6; 8:1; 9:27; 11:1, 22; 15:2, 6, 20-29; 16:4). Acts also portrays Paul as Law-abiding (16:1-3; 18:18; 20:6, 16; 21:24-26),¹¹⁷ while portraying Peter as the head of the Gentile mission (10:1-11:18), both of which differ from Paul's own testimony (Rom. 7:6; 1 Cor. 9:20-21; Gal. 2:11-14). As such, the historical reliability of Acts has rightfully come under question in modern biblical scholarship. However, Acts can be considered dependable if use of the text is undertaken with care, and supported with alternative evidence whenever possible. Fortunately, other evidence is available that can be used to corroborate or controvert the narrative in Acts, most notably here, the letters of Paul.

discussion here. See Zetterholm, 'Historical Developments in Antioch', 90; M. D. Nanos, 'The Myth of the "Law-Free" Paul Standing between Christians and Jews,' *SCJR* 4 (2009), 1-22; *Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, ed. M. D. Nanos and M. Zetterholm (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015). See also Fredriksen, 'Law-Free Apostle'.

¹¹⁴ Baur was especially certain of this; F. C. Baur, 'Die Christuspartei in Der Korinthischen Gemeinde, Der Gegensatz Des Petrinischen Und Paulinischen Christentums in Der Alten Kirche, Der Apostel Petrus in Rom,' *TZT* 4 (1831), 61-206.

¹¹⁵ For example, E. E. Ellis, *The Making of the New Testament Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 315.

¹¹⁶ On this see J. T. Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); C. K. Rothschild, *Luke-Acts and the Rhetoric of History: An Investigation of Early Christian Historiography* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 185-89; J. B. Tyson, 'Acts – a Myth of Christian Origins,' *Forum, Third series* 1 (2007), 171-89.

¹¹⁷ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 85 n. 126.

While Paul was an eye-witness to the events of the 40s and 50s CE, his accounts are no less problematic. Paul had agendas in all of his letters, and these considerably colour his account of important events and figures. Further, Paul's surviving testimonies are letters, designed for a specific community or person on a specific occasion, both of which inevitably greatly influence the content. This is especially true of the most relevant letter to this discussion, his epistle to the Galatians, where he was responding to reports of teachers in Galatia having some success at promoting a Law-abiding gospel. Subsequently, Paul's response is filled with emotion and anger, which makes the already-unreliable format even more so. As a result of these circumstances, in Galatians Paul is prone to exaggeration and hyperbole when recalling major events like the Council of Jerusalem and the Incident at Antioch. Even Paul's other surviving letters, which were not written in such an outbreak of anger, are not systematised writings. But as with Acts, credible and reliable information can be gathered. Evidence from this letter can also be corroborated with the other letters of Paul to testify his continuous positions. The entire authentic Pauline corpus, and even Acts, helps to establish the big picture of Paul's position on these issues, and their endurance into his final years. Despite their limitations, the letters of Paul are invaluable. And despite these hurdles with these major sources, the overall picture from the very earliest church to the second century can still be obtained with some certainty.

1.1 The Earliest Church

The only resource that details the days of the church immediately after Jesus' death is Acts 1-5. In the simplest of terms, Luke portrays the very earliest church as being within the boundaries of Second Temple Judaism. The first Christians were still involved with the Temple where they spent time (2:46; 5:12), prayed at the set times (3:1; 5:21), performed miracles in Jesus' name (3:1-10), and preached (3:12-4:1; 5:20-21, 25, 42). The disciples also exclusively preached to Jews (2:5, 14, 22, 29; 3:12), were held to account by the Jewish authorities (4:1-22; 5:17-40), and were ordered by the risen Jesus to stay in Jerusalem (1:4). It is evident that after the ascension of Jesus his followers had continued a Jewish existence, demonstrated by their worship at the Temple and continued obedience to the Torah.¹¹⁸ Luke's harmonising inclination is seen clearly in Acts 1-5 through the explicit reassurance that Jesus has authorised the Twelve (1:8), that the Holy Spirit guided them (1:2; 2:1-4), and that they could carry on healing in Jesus' name (3:1-10).

As Luke is the singular source for this period of Christian history, there is no alternative version with which to compare or support Luke's account. But it is commonly acknowledged that

¹¹⁸ I. J. Elmer points out that in Acts 11:1-18, Peter's persistent advocacy about God *now* making all food clean supports the thoroughly Jewish nature of the earliest church members. I. J. Elmer, 'Between Jerusalem and Antioch: The Advent of the Gentile Mission,' *AeJT* 6 (2006), 1-11, 4.

the earliest disciples were still within the framework of Second Temple Judaism.¹¹⁹ There is little reason to doubt Luke's account on this fact. Jesus was a Jew, living in Galilee, who preached within Judaism, and who did not envisage or encourage a break with the tradition. It is only natural that his direct followers would continue in this vein, preaching the message of Jesus Christ as a development within Judaism, rather than outside of it. That the earliest followers of Jesus were still Jewish is also supported by later events (which will be detailed below), where Jesus' disciples and family maintain the importance of the Law in the face of those denying it. Up to this point in the narrative there is no mention of bringing the gospel to Gentiles. It may be speculated that, as Law-abiding Jews, the disciples would not have been any more open to communion with Gentiles than any other Jew at that time.¹²⁰ This much is not explicitly stated, but it is confirmed by the later narrative of Peter and Cornelius (10:1-11:18), where only after these events did Peter know to open the good news to Gentiles.¹²¹

This harmonious narrative of the Twelve is subtly disrupted by the introduction of two distinct groups in Acts 6:1-6. After he recounts Peter and John's second arrest by the Jewish authorities, Luke writes that there was trouble between a group he calls the Hellenists (οἱ ἑλληνισταί) and another group he calls the Hebrews (οἱ ἑβραῖοι). The Hellenists complained to the Hebrews about the neglect of their own widows, and to resolve the issue, seven Hellenist leaders were appointed to oversee these administrative duties, while the Twelve could dedicate themselves to prayer and evangelisation. The Twelve laid their hands on these Seven and the problem was seemingly resolved. While Luke portrays these two groups as basically unified and cooperative, there is reason to doubt this harmonious version of events. The specific nature of the complaint against the Hebrews is not important here – even though it is probably historically inaccurate –¹²² but the introduction of these groups is immensely relevant and indicates that the picture Luke tells in his story is not telling something more significant. Acts 6:1 indicates that there were at least two distinct groups in the earliest church; a detail that Luke has, up to now, failed to account for. Given that the Hebrews are never again mentioned by name, and the Hellenists rarely (9:29; 11:20), it is unlikely that Luke had intended for these two groups to feature as distinctive parties in his narrative. Their sudden appearance in 6:1, then, has led to suggestions that Luke has probably

¹¹⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 67; Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 4; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 44-51; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 240; D. A. Hagner, 'Another Look at "the Parting of the Ways"', in *Earliest Christian History*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Maston (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 381-427, 394-95.

¹²⁰ Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 4.

¹²¹ Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 4.

¹²² M. Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1983), 14-15; H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, trans. J. Limburg, A. T. Kraabel, and D. H. Juel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 44; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 53-54.

copied this detail from a new source (used for Acts 6:1-8:40; 11:19-26).¹²³ While the evangelist minimises the conflict in his account, he has here revealed something very significant about the make-up of the very early church; that there were at least two distinct groups within it. Luke does not explain who these groups are, anything about their beliefs, or how they differed from each other, but fortunately a lot is evident simply from the names he uses for each.

Modern scholarly consensus sides with the traditional view first put forward by John Chrysostom; that the terms οἱ ἑλληνισταί and οἱ ἑβραῖοι mean ‘Greek speakers’ and ‘Aramaic speakers’.¹²⁴ From here, much can be implied. For example, use of different languages (to the extent that the groups are distinguishable by them) suggests different geographical origins. That Aramaic was the language of the Hebrews indicates that its members were native to Israel, while it is likely that the Hellenists were originally from the Diaspora but had moved to Jerusalem.¹²⁵ The relationship between these two parties based on this factor alone has had various interpretations. Some scholars see this as a situation in which the Hellenists and the Hebrews were quite distinct and separate communities, with not only different languages, but different Scriptures,¹²⁶ separate services,¹²⁷ different leadership groups, and different missionary fields.¹²⁸ In such a view the two were essentially separate Christ-believing communities.¹²⁹ While there is a reasonable basis for these ideas, there is no need to go that far. But it can certainly be established that there were two groups different enough to be distinguishable from each other; one local to Israel, and one from the Diaspora. The characters so far in Luke’s narrative can be sorted quite easily into these groups. Naturally, the disciples and family of Jesus, who were local to Israel and settled in Jerusalem, and who spoke Aramaic, were most likely considered Hebrews.¹³⁰ This also fits in with their approval

¹²³ It is frequently acknowledged that in Acts 6 Luke has switched to a new written source. See Conzelmann, *Acts*, xxxviii; C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 305; J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1998), 86. J. D. G. Dunn suggests that the source possibly had an Antiochene origin, and was the story of the Hellenists’ own history. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 242. Against this consensus, see H. Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah: Collected Essays*, trans. D. E. Orton (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 151-53.

¹²⁴ Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 24; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 347; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 65; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 51.

¹²⁵ C. C. Hill does not take the use of languages to be significant. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 22-24.

¹²⁶ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 55.

¹²⁷ G. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity*, trans. M. E. Boring (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 41.

¹²⁸ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 55.

¹²⁹ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 45; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 66. Dunn suggests that the use of different terms can imply that there was some suspicion or ‘otherness’ felt between the two groups. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 250-51. M. Painter suggests that the different preferences for language indicate cultural preferences; those using Aramaic were more conservative, while those using Greek were more progressive. J. Painter, *Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 73.

¹³⁰ H. Koester, ‘Gnomai Diaphoroi: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity’, in *Trajectories through Early Christianity*, ed. H. Koester and J. M. Robinson

of the new Hellenist leaders (6:6), two of whom, Stephen and Philip, go on to have an important role in the narrative. The Hellenists, like the Hebrews, were Jewish, and their stance on the Law is not mentioned explicitly at this point, though it is illuminated in the proceeding narratives.

The story of the Hellenists continues after Acts 6, in the account of the arrest and martyrdom of Stephen, one of the seven Hellenist leaders previously chosen. Luke writes that Stephen was accused of speaking against Moses, God, the Temple, and the Law (6:11, 13). As a result, Stephen was brought to trial before the council, where he gave a lengthy (and largely off-topic) speech which caused general outrage, and as a direct result, he was stoned to death by the angry crowd (7:60). Luke claims that the charges against Stephen were false (6:11-13), but there is some cause for doubting this. Despite Luke's insistence that Stephen was innocent of the charges (he himself later writes that the Hellenists indeed *did* go on to set aside the Law, for Gentile followers at least. As such, despite Luke's protestations of Stephen's innocence, it is likely that he, and the Hellenist believers more generally,¹³¹ were guilty of speaking against the Law.¹³²

Following Stephen's death, a wider persecution was undertaken, where 'all except the apostles' (πλήν τῶν ἀποστόλων) were forced to flee into the surrounding areas. Again, Luke here reveals another significant piece of information; that the apostles were exempt from this persecution (8:1). This is important for several reasons. Firstly, it indicates that the disciples were distinct enough from the Hellenists so as not to be caught up in the persecution.¹³³ Secondly, it is reasonable to assume that the Hebrews generally also were exempt from this persecution, not just the Twelve.¹³⁴ And finally, that the Hebrews escaped persecution indicates that they did *not* disrespect God or Torah or Moses or the Temple, as the Hellenists had.

Thus far, the differences between the Hellenists and the Hebrews seem quite significant. In the narrative of their conflict (6:1-7) and the martyrdom of Stephen (6:8-7:60), Luke has revealed that in the earliest period of the Jesus movement there was some distinction between groups in the church, and that one of the branches had questioned the importance of the Law, while one had not.

(Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 114-57, 120; Painter, *Just James*, 44; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 65.

¹³¹ Hill disputes this point, arguing that Stephen's views were not necessarily representative of the Hellenists. Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 41-43.

¹³² A position commonly held. For example, see R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. K. Grobel, Ninth ed. (London: SCM, 1948), 54-56; Koester, 'Gnomai Diaphoroi', 120; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 69; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaisers*, 58. G. Luedemann writes that it 'possibly could' be the case. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 41. Dunn says that Stephen was probably only critical of the Temple; a school of thought Dunn hypothesises was picked up from Jesus' teaching. Criticism of the Temple would particularly anger Diaspora Jews who had come to settle in Jerusalem presumably to be near the Temple. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 261-62.

¹³³ Conzelmann, *Acts*, 44; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 71; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 277.

¹³⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 70-71.

Luke continues to trace the story of the Hellenists after their flight from Jerusalem. After Stephen's death, the narrative turns to the actions of Philip; he took a significant step by preaching to the Samaritans (8:4-13), and Peter and John were called in to bless and authorise this mission (8:14-17). Philip then converted and baptised the first Gentile, an Ethiopian eunuch (8:26-40).¹³⁵ But Luke interrupts this Hellenist narrative to begin the story of Saul's conversion (9:1-30) and the series of stories about Peter and Cornelius, where God revealed to Peter that the gospel was to be brought to the Gentiles (10:1-11:18). Luke returns to his previous Hellenist source in 11:19, where the Hellenists had settled in Antioch, and had started preaching to the Gentiles as well (11:19-26). This is a very significant part of the Acts narrative. Here, Luke has introduced the bringing of the gospel to the Gentiles. But his story contains two different versions of this development; one with Peter, and one with the Hellenists at Antioch. Both shall be looked at in turn.

In the Peter version, the gospel was opened to the Gentiles after Peter received a series of visions from God that declared that he has made foods clean (10:9-16). Peter was then summoned by Cornelius, a God-fearer, whom God had instructed (10:1-8). Having come to terms with these revelations, Peter travelled to Jerusalem, and explained this new development to the church there, who were initially hesitant, but went on to accept that the gospel is now open to all (11:1-18). This is Luke's more prominent version, and he accompanies it with his characteristic guidance and authorisation by the Holy Spirit (10:19, 45-47; 11:12), as well as widespread acceptance of this development from those in Jerusalem (11:1-18). However, there is much to raise suspicion over the historical authenticity of this account.¹³⁶ The story is filled with common Lukan features;¹³⁷ along with the guidance by the Spirit, Luke has here placed a devout centurion,¹³⁸ divine guidance through angels and visions,¹³⁹ as well as parallels with the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.¹⁴⁰ But this is not the primary evidence against this version of the story. The strongest testimony against the narrative in Acts 10:1-11:18 is that Peter's calling to the Gentiles is contradicted by first-hand evidence in Gal. 2:1-10. Here, Paul insists three times that Peter was

¹³⁵ Dunn points out that the Ethiopian eunuch is significant for two reasons; that he is Ethiopian, a region that was the edge of the known world, and so was significant for the gospel reaching the 'ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8). Secondly, he was a eunuch, and so incapable of being circumcised, and thus officially not a full adherent to Judaism. This unnamed convert was thus most likely a Gentile. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 288-89.

¹³⁶ There is now general acceptance that the Cornelius story is unhistorical. See F. Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles: A Sociological Approach*, Revised and expanded ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 23-25; Conzelmann, *Acts*, 80; Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 1-5; D. C. Sim, 'The Appearances of the Risen Christ to Paul: Identifying Their Implications and Complications,' *ABR* 54 (2006), 1-12, 7.

¹³⁷ See Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 62-63; also Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 2.

¹³⁸ Seen elsewhere in Luke 7:1-10; 23:47; Acts 27:1-3, 30-32, 42-44.

¹³⁹ Luke 1:11-20, 26-38; 2:9-14; 24:2-7; Acts 1:10-11; 5:19-20; 7:55-56; 8:26; 9:3-6, 10-12; 12:7-11; 16:9-10; 18:9-10; 23:11; 27:23-34.

¹⁴⁰ Acts 2:1-13 also 4:31; 8:14-17; 19:1-7.

allocated the mission to the circumcised (Gal. 2:7, 8, 9). Paul's letter to the Galatians does not mention a Petrine engagement with the Gentile mission – a fact that surely would have helped boost the authority of Paul's case of his own mission to the Gentiles.¹⁴¹ So while Luke wrote that Peter initiated the Gentile mission, it is more likely that this event did not occur as Luke has recounted.

Luke's alternative version of how the gospel was taken to the Gentiles is less prominent, but fits in more reasonably with what is known of the early church. In his account of when the Hellenists settled in Antioch, Luke writes that they firstly spoke only to Jews (11:19), but he notes that some among them took the active step of proclaiming to the Gentiles (11:20),¹⁴² and that the hand of God was with them in doing so (11:21). In response, Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch, and he rejoiced at their actions (11:22-23). Barnabas then collected Saul from Tarsus, and together they continued their mission in Antioch. Luke concludes the account by saying that it was here that the disciples were first called Christians. Later, Paul and Barnabas embarked on a larger mission to Cyprus and Asia Minor (13:2-14:21).

This secondary version of how the gospel was taken to the Gentiles contradicts Luke's earlier version. Of course, the Gentile mission did not necessarily have to originate in only one place, but the idea that Peter was the founder of the mission to the Gentiles is untenable on the first-hand evidence. On the other hand, the credibility of this second version is sounder. It is already known from earlier in Acts that the Hellenists had been persecuted for their critical stance towards the Law, and that they had begun to branch out beyond the Jewish populations (8:4-40). It would be a natural step for this group to be the first to offer the message of Christ to Gentiles.¹⁴³ Luke recounts that this group organised several large-scale missions to actively convert Gentiles; they organised missions to Samaria (8:4-25), Caesarea (8:40), Phoenicia, Antioch, and Cyprus (11:19). That the Hellenists in Antioch were first called 'Christians' (11:26) also supports this view: a title that acknowledged this group as somewhat independent of Judaism and the rituals and laws that came with that tradition.¹⁴⁴ As such, this secondary version of the step towards a Gentile mission is the more credible version in Acts.

¹⁴¹ Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 4.

¹⁴² Different ancient texts have slightly varied wording, but Dunn points out that whatever Luke's original terminology in 11:20, it clearly is meant to be contrasted to the previous use of 'to the Jews only' in 11:19. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 298.

¹⁴³ Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 11.

¹⁴⁴ Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 9. Dunn warns against the assumption that the designation of 'Christians' means that they were distinct from Judaism; suggesting that they were just a definable group within Judaism. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 305.

There is no mention in Acts 11:19-26 about how the Law factored into this new Gentile mission, but there are hints further on in the text. Luke does not mention the Law in relation to the Gentile mission until Acts 15. According to Luke, the Antiochene church's version of the gospel had been challenged by some from Judea who insisted that Gentile converts undergo circumcision (15:1-2), who then led everyone to discuss the matter at the Jerusalem Council. Acts 15 thus implies that Paul and Barnabas had, up to that point, been teaching that converts did *not* have to undergo circumcision. The Hellenists, then, had been preaching a Law-free Gospel.¹⁴⁵ That Paul was an advocate of a Law-free mission to the Gentiles is also firmly supported by Paul's own letters. It also fits in logically that a Law-free Gentile mission should be conducted by Hellenistic Jews who came from the Diaspora, spoke Greek, and were relaxed about the Law.¹⁴⁶

Based on the available evidence then, it was the Hellenists who formed the Antiochene church that first seriously reached out to the Gentiles to preach the gospel, and it is likely that they did so without requiring their new converts to also follow the ritualistic aspects of the Law. The success of their Law-free Gentile mission, as well as the friction it caused with the Christians still in Jerusalem, can be seen in the events that soon followed these developments; the Jerusalem Council, the Incident at Antioch, and the crisis at Galatia.

1.2 The Jerusalem Council

In Acts the different views on Gentiles and the Law becomes very pronounced after the Hellenists at Antioch started a large-scale Gentile mission. The differences between the Hebrews still in Jerusalem and the Hellenists at Antioch becomes an explicit conversation and debate, and one that was so significant that it prompted the church in Jerusalem to call its first official meeting to discuss and resolve the issue. The Council was not about whether Gentiles should be admitted in the first place, but about the conditions upon which they could be admitted.¹⁴⁷ As such, the Jerusalem Council is one of the most significant events for the purposes of this discussion. The mother church in Jerusalem called its first conference purely to sort out the issue of the Law and the Gentile mission – but considerable evidence demonstrates that the issue remained unsettled, and the different beliefs continued after the Council concluded.

¹⁴⁵ Paul himself did not mention the Antiochene origins of the Gentile mission in his letters, but where he would have confirmed such a story (Gal. 1:17-24) he was trying to claim the divine origins of both his apostleship and his mission to the Gentiles.

¹⁴⁶ Dunn says that this should not be taken too far, citing the readiness of the Antiochene church to side with the 'men from James' rather than Paul in the later Incident at Antioch. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 317-18.

¹⁴⁷ Conzelmann, *Acts*, 115.

Luke writes that the Jerusalem Council was prompted by the arrival of some people in Antioch heralding from Judea, where they questioned the Antiochene Gentile missions, and insisted that Gentiles needed to undergo circumcision in order to be saved (Acts 15:1). The Antiochene church did not change their position, and nor did the men from Jerusalem, and so representatives from Antioch travelled to Jerusalem to discuss the question with the apostles and the elders. Paul's account of what prompted the Council is different; he insists he only went to Jerusalem to meet with the disciples because he received a revelation to do so (Gal. 2:2). Of these two versions, Paul's account is the most suspect as one of Paul's recurring agendas in Galatians was to prove that he was not subject to the authority of the Jerusalem church.¹⁴⁸ This explains why he would have attributed his going to Jerusalem to a revelation from God, rather than at the beckoning of Jerusalem. Luke's version also fits in with what is known so far of the Gentile missions from Antioch; that they were successful and did not demand circumcision. And so, the most likely course of events is that the success of the Hellenists' Gentile mission from Antioch caught the eye of some in Jerusalem, and prompted the calling of the Council to sort out the relevance of the Law for the Gentile mission.

Once at the Council, the exact events are difficult to reclaim from the available sources. Paul's version of the Council (Gal. 2:1-10) is replete with unfinished thoughts, parenthetical remarks, and neglect of important details, and Luke's agenda of a unified church significantly affects the reliability of his version of the events (Acts 15:1-21).¹⁴⁹ But some fundamental details can be recovered and are confirmed by both accounts. Most important, is that the issue up for discussion most definitely was whether Gentile converts to the Christian movement needed to undergo circumcision and thus adhere to the Torah.¹⁵⁰ That this was the issue at hand is explicit in Luke's account (Acts 15:2), and also attested in Paul's, though his account generally is less clear, but he too is explicit about his defence of his Law-free Gentile mission to the Council (see Gal. 2:2-3). Both accounts confirm that the Council was attended by Paul and Barnabas from Antioch (Paul's account also includes a Gentile named Titus, who is missing from Acts), as well as the apostles, James (the brother of Jesus), and Peter (Paul's account includes John). Both accounts also confirm that Paul and Barnabas defended their Law-free Gentile mission and argued that it should

¹⁴⁸ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 80; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 453.

¹⁴⁹ Some have argued that the meeting Paul outlined in Gal. 2 is not the Jerusalem Council outlined in Acts 15, but a smaller meeting mentioned in Acts 11. On such a timeline, Paul's letter to Galatia was written *before* the Council in Acts 15. See Bauckham, 'Gentiles', 135-39. As Dunn points out, even if Gal 2 did recall the events mentioned in Acts 11, the consequences for the theological context are irrelevant; both theories agree that at some point in the earliest church, the issue of circumcision for Gentiles was debated and the cause of considerable concern. Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 477.

¹⁵⁰ That the issue at the Council was Gentile circumcision and thus Gentile obedience to the Law more generally is very widely held position. For example; Koester, 'Gnomai Diaphoroi', 120; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 35; D. Lührmann, *Galatians*, trans. O. C. Dean Jr. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 24; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 540; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 439; C. S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Volume Three* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 2210.

continue. They were met with some opposition, which Paul and Luke both attribute to a third party of ‘false brothers’ (Gal. 2:4; Luke named them as Pharisees in Acts 15:5). In both versions, Paul and Barnabas did not concede to opposition arguments. The two differ on the role of Peter. As has already been mentioned, Luke’s version has that Peter argued in support of Paul and Barnabas for the continuation of the Law-free mission to the Gentiles (15:7-11). Again, this is historically unlikely given the complete absence of this fact from Paul’s account. In Galatians, Peter is merely a recipient of Paul’s arguments. He has no active role. Paul only insists that it was agreed that Peter was entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (2:7, 8, 9).

The outcome of the Council is a highly contested topic. Luke writes that after the testimonies of Paul, Barnabas, and Peter to the Council, James approved an almost complete relaxation of the Torah for Gentile converts, but required that they uphold certain commitments to purity (Acts 15:20, 29), writing up this agreement in the so-called Apostolic Decree. Barnabas and Paul were sent off with two representatives from Jerusalem, Judas and Silas, to take the news back to Antioch, where it was received with joy (15:30-35). Luke portrays the ruling of the Council as definitive, as the issue of Law-observance for Gentiles is never raised again in Acts.¹⁵¹ This version of events, while neat and harmonious, is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, as has been covered, Luke’s portrayal of Peter as an active defender of the Law-free Gentile mission is doubtful. Secondly, Paul does not mention the Apostolic Decree in his own account of the Council when including the decree in his account would have considerably helped his argument in support of the Law-free Gentile mission. There is also no evidence of the decree in other Christian documents, and so it is thus unlikely that the Council actually produced such a written decree.¹⁵² Finally, Luke’s dominant agenda of presenting a unified church would prevent a report of conflict or disagreement had it occurred. This is demonstrated in his complete neglect of the clash between Paul and Peter, and Paul and Barnabas at the Incident at Antioch (discussed below). Instead of reporting the divisions in the church, Luke’s version of the Council plays directly to his overall purpose of presenting a unified and monolithic early church which only undertakes significant progress under the authority of the Twelve. J. D. G. Dunn points out that, poetically, Luke’s version of the story unites three key figures in this significant step in the Christian movement; Peter arguing for the Gentile mission, James approving it, and this being done in Pauline terms. In doing so, Luke was able to portray the harmony he so desired.¹⁵³ As such, Luke’s version of the Council does not contain a historically reliable account of the outcome.

¹⁵¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 88.

¹⁵² Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 90-91; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 103. Against this point see Conzelmann, *Acts*, 119. S. G Wilson argues that the Decree is pre-Lukan, and suggests that it originated at a later council where Paul was not present. See S. G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 191.

¹⁵³ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 465.

Paul's version claims a rather different resolution. Though he agrees with Luke that the apostles agreed to let him carry on his Law-free gospel and Gentile mission (Gal. 2:9), his reported outcome differs in some significant ways. Firstly, he insists three times that there was an agreed-upon demarcation of missionary fields (2:7, 8, 9). He writes that he was entrusted with the mission to the uncircumcised, while Peter was entrusted with the mission to the circumcised. After this agreement, the disciples offered him their right hand of fellowship, and asked that he remember the poor (2:9-10). Secondly, Paul does not account for any agreement on his end that Gentiles should uphold *some* of the Torah. No such concessions are reported at all. In Paul's version, he went to Jerusalem, explained his gospel, and left with his gospel unchanged, with the right hand of fellowship, and with the responsibility for the entire mission to the Gentiles.

Even though Paul was a direct witness to these events, there are still reasonable grounds on which to doubt his version of the outcome, and these can all be traced to his purpose in writing Galatians. His letter to this church was written to validate his own gospel to the Gentiles in light of opponents who had been preaching against him. As will be discussed in some detail below, in response to these attacks Paul insists that his gospel was received from God, not man, and that the apostles in Jerusalem approved of his mission – in an attempt to disprove the claims of his opponents that the apostles did not approve of it. This would provide more than ample motivation for Paul to give the impression that the apostles officially approved his mission, and potentially to move the blame for a Law-abiding opposition to the external false brothers.¹⁵⁴ There is thus also reasonable doubt for Paul's claim that the Council agreed to approve his Law-free mission.

While Acts and Galatians both have Peter and James approve of Paul's mission, and the issue resolved, there is sufficient motivation for them both to have reported the outcome as such – Paul was looking to validate his Law-free mission, and Luke *was* a Law-free Christian. Further, the events that transpire immediately after the Council and in the decades following, demonstrate that the issue of Gentiles and the Law was not actually resolved in Jerusalem. With both accounts of the Council providing a questionable result, there are no other no direct sources to determine what occurred in the first Jerusalem Council, and so speculation is all that remains. Unsurprisingly, the actual outcome of the Council is a contentious issue. A majority of scholars argue that at the Council the apostles *did* approve of Paul's mission, thus allowing Gentiles to remain uncircumcised,¹⁵⁵ while a minority argue that the pillars did not approve Paul's mission at all.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 87.

¹⁵⁵ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 52; *Peter in the New Testament*, ed. R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried, and J. Reumann (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1973), 26; M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1979), 116; Meier, 'Antioch', 38; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 36; A. F. Segal, 'Studying Judaism with Christian Sources,' *USQR* 44 (1991), 267-

Some suggest that the demarcation of mission fields was agreed to, but did not really work as a proper solution,¹⁵⁷ and it has even been suggested that there was no agreement reached,¹⁵⁸ or that there is no way of being certain.¹⁵⁹ But despite the uncertainties surrounding the agreements reached at Jerusalem, it can be concluded with a fair degree of certainty, that whatever happened at Jerusalem there was no definitive and final resolution to the issue of Gentiles and the Law for the church. Even though Luke and Paul both claim that there was some form of meaningful and concluding decision on the matter, the events that occurred after the Council that still relate to Gentiles and the Law demonstrate that there was still conflict over the very same issues. Despite the entire purpose of the Council being to solve this issue, the event was ultimately unsuccessful. In this way, the resolution reached at the Council is almost irrelevant. Perhaps the Council did not agree on any solution, or perhaps they reached a compromise that turned out to be unworkable, or perhaps one or both parties changed their minds after the Council's conclusion. This much cannot be known for sure, but what is evident is that the issue of Gentile obedience to the Law still was the basis of continuing disagreement. The events that followed the Council are important here, and this continuing debate is seen most clearly in the Incident at Antioch.

1.3 Incident at Antioch

As mentioned earlier, Luke's account of the aftermath of the Jerusalem Council shows no indication of conflict after the meeting. Luke does trace the positive reception of the decree in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35), but Paul's account shows something quite different upon his return to the city. Paul writes that not long after the Council's conclusion, Peter came to Antioch and had been eating with the Gentiles, but withdrew after 'certain people came from James' (2:12). Paul writes that not only Peter withdrew, but 'the rest of the Jews', including his travelling companion Barnabas. Paul openly confronted Peter about his hypocrisy 'to his face' and 'before them all', arguing that that, 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to practice Judaism?' (πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις Ἰουδαΐζειν; 2:14).¹⁶⁰ This is the end of the incident as recorded by Paul; he offers no account of the result or conclusion of the conflict. In

86, 276-77; J. Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 138-44; J. L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation and Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1997), 220; Zetterholm, 'Historical Developments in Antioch', 85; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 456-57; Keener, *Acts, Volume 3*, 2194; Bennema, 'Ethnic Conflict', 755.

¹⁵⁶ D. C. Sim argues that apostolic approval of Paul's Law-free Gentile mission would have sacrificed harmony within the Jerusalem Church, would have compromised their mission to the Jews, and would not have been practical for Gentiles and Jews worshipping and dining together. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 84-85.

¹⁵⁷ Koester, 'Gnomai Diaphoroi', 120; Elmer, 'Advent of the Gentile Mission', 4.

¹⁵⁸ Painter, *Just James*, 50.

¹⁵⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 91-92.

¹⁶⁰ The NRSV translation of Ἰουδαΐζω as 'live like Jews' should be stronger. For example, Josephus' use of the term in *Ant.* 2.454 is done in explicit association with circumcision (μέχρι περιτομῆς Ἰουδαΐσθαι).

this way, his description of the event is similar to his disorganised recollection of the Jerusalem Council, and is symptomatic of the medium in which he records his testimony. But enough is recoverable from Gal. 2:11-14 in order to establish the state of the debate over Gentiles and the Law.

Paul writes that Peter had been eating with Gentiles in Antioch. Jews eating with Gentiles was problematic for Jewish Law for several reasons; Jews were not to drink wine with Gentiles because it was assumed that Gentiles ‘poured out libations’ every time they drank wine. Jews were also not to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols at any point, which occurred frequently at Gentile meals,¹⁶¹ and often Gentiles generally did not understand Jewish food laws.¹⁶² As such, Jews habitually did not eat with Gentiles to avoid such impurity and idolatry. In Antioch, when they arrived, the men from James disapproved of Peter’s eating with Gentiles, and severely enough so that Peter conformed to their ideas, drew back, and remained separate (ἀφορίζω).¹⁶³

Paul’s reaction to Peter’s sudden separation from Gentiles shows his own disapproval of Peter’s actions. He reprimanded Peter, accused him of hypocrisy (ὑπόκρισις),¹⁶⁴ said that he did not act consistently with the truth of the gospel, and asked why he insisted Gentiles practice Judaism if he himself did not. This rhetorical question demonstrates that after James’ men had come, Peter had been compelling Gentiles to practice Judaism (ιουδαίζω; Gal. 2:14), confirming the issues at hand were once again about Gentile obedience to the Law. And ultimately, the Incident at Antioch shows that Paul and the apostles disagreed on this issue.

This disagreement in Antioch also helps to shed light on the outcome of the seemingly very recent Jerusalem Council. If the Council had approved of Paul’s Law-free mission (as both Luke and Paul attested), then why did James send men to follow up on Paul’s actions in Antioch? And if a Law-free mission had been approved, why did Peter, Barnabas, and the other Jews in the Antiochene church so suddenly disregard that decision and conform to the rules of the men from James (2:13)? If a (relatively) Law-free mission to the Gentiles was authorised in any way at Jerusalem, then the actions of the people from James, Peter, and Barnabas at Antioch, make little sense.

¹⁶¹ Segal, ‘Studying Judaism’, 269.

¹⁶² Segal, ‘Studying Judaism’, 269.

¹⁶³ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 479.

¹⁶⁴ An outburst that caused substantial headaches for early Christian interpreters. See M. Mitchell, ‘Peter’s “Hypocrisy” and Paul’s: Two “Hypocrites” at the Foundation of Earliest Christianity?’, *NTS* 58 (2012), 213-34, 220-21.

Paul does not tell the Galatians how this confrontation ended. After his rhetorical question to Peter (2:14), the letter turns to Paul's own ideas about salvation by faith and not the Law (2:15-21). But again, a good idea of the outcome of the incident can be garnered from the available evidence, or lack thereof. Firstly, Paul's failure to recount a win indicates that he did not have a victory to report. If he had convinced the rest of the Antiochene church to remain committed to a Law-free Gentile mission, including such a victory would have made his case to the Galatians stronger. Such a scenario thus remains doubtful on account of its absence in Paul's account. Paul also explicitly wrote about how his Antiochene colleagues abandoned him to join the men from James. He notes Barnabas by name, his fellow missionary to the Gentiles – a blow that would have been particularly hard.¹⁶⁵ Paul thus reveals that after James' men came, he stood alone, while the leaders of the Antiochene church defected back to the Jerusalem Church.¹⁶⁶

It is widely accepted that Paul was defeated at Antioch.¹⁶⁷ This was an immensely significant event. Paul's defeat here was not only the loss of a debate, but it resulted in his departure from Antioch altogether. Paul thus had been cast out of his base church; the group where he had spent most of his Christian life, and from where and for whom he preached to the Gentiles, establishing churches in Syria, Cilicia, and Galatia.¹⁶⁸ His departure also probably signalled a break with the churches he established in Syria and Cilicia, where he had worked, as he never mentions these churches in his letters. By adhering to the men from James, the church at Antioch had

¹⁶⁵ Even Luke tells about the falling out between Barnabas and Paul with the result that they embarked on different missions (Acts 15:36-41). Luke attributes their separation to a disagreement over whether John Mark should accompany them on their next mission. But this version was a Lukan effort to portray harmony, and it is more likely that they parted ways because of the Incident at Antioch, when Barnabas decided to separate from Gentiles, in accordance with the wishes of the men from James. Those who agree that Paul and Barnabas fell out as a result of the Incident at Antioch include; F. C. Baur, *Paul: The Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine, Volume One*, trans. E. Zeller, Second ed. (Edinburgh: Williams & Norgate, 1876), 134; Conzelmann, *Acts*, 123; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 12-13; Painter, *Just James*, 50; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 100.

¹⁶⁶ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 100. The later tradition that Peter, Paul's opponent in this conflict, was bishop of Antioch possibly also supports the theory of a Pauline defeat in the city. See Eusebius, *H.E.* 3:22.

¹⁶⁷ B. H. Streeter, *The Primitive Church: Studied with Special Reference to the Origins of the Christian Ministry* (London: Macmillan, 1929), 49; Meier, 'Antioch', 24; Lührmann, *Galatians*, 25-27; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 3; Martyn, *Galatians*, 240; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 100; Zetterholm, 'Historical Developments in Antioch', 89; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 490; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 114. J. Painter disagrees; Painter, *Just James*, 72, and similarly, J. T. Sanders has suggested that the outcome was two separate communities in Antioch. J. T. Sanders, *Schismatics, Sectarians, Dissidents, Deviants: The First One Hundred Years of Jewish-Christian Relations* (London: SCM, 1993), 154. Hengel suggests that the incident did not signal a major breach between the groups. Hengel, *Acts*, 111.

¹⁶⁸ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 491.

abandoned Paul.¹⁶⁹ As such, the Incident at Antioch was not a temporary crisis, but one that had lasting consequences.¹⁷⁰

Endless discussions can be had about why there was such a divisive clash in Antioch. Was it because there had been no agreement in Jerusalem? Was it because there were different understandings about a reached agreement?¹⁷¹ Did James change his mind, and come to enforce his new opinion?¹⁷² Whatever the reality was, the clash at Antioch between Paul and the apostles over Gentiles and the Law plainly shows that the issue was not resolved at the Jerusalem Council, that it was not resolved at Antioch, and that an outnumbered Paul departed Antioch still firm in his opinion that Gentile converts did not need to adhere to the Torah.

1.4 The Position of the Jerusalem Church

There is some disagreement over the position that James and Peter held in relation to Gentiles and the Law. Some think that these apostles believed that Gentiles should adhere to the Law,¹⁷³ while others argue that they were in favour of a Law-free gospel.¹⁷⁴ In the latter case, the conservative opposition to Paul at these events is attributed to other groups within the Jerusalem Church, such as the Christian Pharisees in Luke (Acts 15:5), or the false brothers in Paul (Gal. 2:4).¹⁷⁵ Looking at the roles of James and Peter in the Council of Jerusalem and the Incident at Antioch is critical for understanding their position on the Law. While James is explicitly named as the source of the Law-observing men in the Incident at Antioch, and Peter described as joining these men from James and encouraging Gentiles to live like Jews, the stance of the apostles in these two incidents is still seen as controversial. Exactly who was trying to stop Paul in Jerusalem and in Antioch is important for the picture this study paints, and so it is relevant to establish what role these two figures had in these events.

¹⁶⁹ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 492.

¹⁷⁰ Painter, *Just James*, 50.

¹⁷¹ M. D. Nanos, 'What Was at Stake with Peter's "Eating with Gentiles" at Antioch?', in *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, ed. M. D. Nanos (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 282-318, 300-01; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 460.

¹⁷² Zetterholm, 'Historical Developments in Antioch', 85.

¹⁷³ F. C. Baur, *Paul: The Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine, Volume Two*, trans. R. A. Menzies (London: Williams & Norgate, 1875), 119; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 31-38; Painter, *Just James*, 50; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 83-85; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 86.

¹⁷⁴ J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1967), xxi; Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 50; Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 114.

¹⁷⁵ J. Martyn argues that the false brothers in Gal. 2:14 started anti-Paulinism. Martyn, *Galatians*, 218. E. E. Ellis argues that some besides the apostles disagreed with the conclusion of the council. He also refers to a 'fifth' mission, which was counter to all of the cooperating four missions; this fifth mission were the enemies for all four missions and were the cause behind Paul's enemies at Corinth, the false brothers at the council, and the Judaizers at Galatia. Ellis, *New Testament Documents*, 315-16. R. Deines sees the Pharisees as the originators of request to circumcise Gentiles; R. Deines, *Acts of God in History: Studies Towards Recovering a Theological Historiography* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 140.

It has been seen so far in this chapter that the Twelve and Jesus' family were the Hebrews mentioned in Acts 6:1; they lived within the boundaries of Judaism, and escaped persecution because they did not criticise the Torah as Stephen and the Hellenists did. They remained in Jerusalem while the Hellenists were forced to flee to Antioch. While Peter at first was likely the leader of the Jesus movement,¹⁷⁶ by the time of the Jerusalem Council, Jesus' brother James was the most authoritative in the church at Jerusalem.¹⁷⁷

Even though James is absent from the Acts narrative until chapter 10 (aside from an unnamed reference in 1:14), he is presented as the most authoritative apostle by both Luke (Acts 12:17; 15:13) and Paul (Gal. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:7). It is thus useful to gather some information about James, the brother of Jesus. Very relevant is that James had a reputation for being Law-observant. This is apparent in the account of James' death in Josephus' *Antiquities* (20.200-03). Josephus writes that James' persecution was authorised by the high priest Ananus, who delivered James to be stoned for having transgressed the Law (20.200). This caused such offence that protesters, themselves described as strict observers of the Law, appealed to King Agrippa II who deposed Ananus. That these strict observers of the Law were angry at the accusation of lawlessness that led to James' death heavily implies that Ananus' accusation was false. Thus, James was popularly renowned as an observer of the Law.¹⁷⁸ Further evidence of James' Law-observance comes from later references to Jesus' brother as James the Just and Hegesippus' explanation that he was named so because of his observance of the Law (recorded in Eusebius, *H.E.* 2.23).¹⁷⁹ Extra-biblical evidence thus attributes a great Law-abiding righteousness to Jesus' brother. This is further supported by the canonical letter later attributed to James, which demonstrates that his name and

¹⁷⁶ Peter is named first of the Twelve (Acts 1:13), he preaches to the crowds (2:14-36), and heals in Jesus' name (3:4-7). J. Painter disagrees with this fundamental point of Peter's early leadership. He writes that there is no evidence that Peter ever was a leader of the church, who then submitted to James' authority. He argues that Peter's prominence in Acts 1-5 was a result of his lead role in the missionary activity of the early church, not his leadership of the church as a whole. See Painter, *Just James*, 42, 44. Ultimately, Peter's early leadership is not important here.

¹⁷⁷ There can be some speculation about how James came to power. G. Luedemann suggests that James took over because of Peter's focus on mission work. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 45. D. C. Sim argues that it is possible that James challenged Peter due to his weak stance on the Law, and that after taking over the leadership, James became active against the Law-free gospel and sent delegates to Antioch to challenge their Law-free mission (Acts 15:1-2). Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 82; similarly, see also Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 45; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 116. But this can be little more than speculation.

¹⁷⁸ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 62; Goulder, 'Those Outside', 294 n. 17-18; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 86-87.

¹⁷⁹ Goulder, 'Those Outside', 294 n. 17-18; Painter, *Just James*, 49.

figure was associated with a Law-abiding form of Christianity. And a look at the major events in the early church about Gentiles and the Law fits in with these extra biblical attestations.¹⁸⁰

Firstly, in the initial dispute that prompted the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-2), while Luke does not name those who disputed Paul and Barnabas originally in Antioch, there is some indication that these were men sent from James.¹⁸¹ In Acts 15:2 Luke says that the opponents were certain people from Judea (ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας), but he later refers to James' involvement in this initial discussion; after the Council has been concluded and James was composing his letter to the Gentile believers, he wrote 'Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us (τινὲς ἐξ ἡμῶν [ἐξεληθόντες]), though with no instruction from us, have said things to disturb you...' (15:24). This suggests that the original opponents in Antioch in 15:1-2 had come from James, or at least claimed to do so. Luke's hurried attempt to distance James from these initial opponents ('though with no instruction from us') is suspect, and reads as a defence. What is likely is that Luke's sources for this section probably had named James as the instigator of the delegates.¹⁸² This aspect was one that Luke wanted to amend by adding that they had no instruction from James, despite what his sources had stated. All these factors indicate that James was possibly involved and even initiated the dispute with the Law-free Gentile mission from the very beginning.¹⁸³

James was a key figure at the Council of Jerusalem. Both Paul and Acts depict him as being the most authoritative of the disciples there. Paul names James first among the pillars (Gal. 2:9), and Luke has James make the final decision (Acts 15:13-21). Both Luke and Paul say that James agreed to let Paul continue his Gentile mission, but the above discussion has shown that there is some doubt over the reliability of this reported outcome. Seeing as the Council's outcome cannot be known, it can only be speculated what James, a devout and Law-abiding Jew would have thought of a Law-free mission to the Gentiles. D. C. Sim says that he would have automatically opposed it.¹⁸⁴ Some adhere to the texts and say he did approve of a Law-free Gentile mission.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ Painter has suggested that Luke has minimised the role of James in Acts because James' position on the Law contradicted the evangelist's, who, despite this disagreement, could not deny the role that James had in the early church. Painter, *Just James*, 56.

¹⁸¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 80. Against this idea, S. Keener writes that they were the false brothers at the Council. Keener, *Acts*, Volume 3, 2211.

¹⁸² Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 80.

¹⁸³ Sim has argued that James' efforts to intervene in the Antiochene mission go back even earlier. He suggests that Barnabas' initial journey to Antioch was as a delegate from Jerusalem, sent with the purpose of preventing the spread of a Law-free gospel, but he was converted when he arrived in Antioch. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 74-75.

¹⁸⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 83-86.

¹⁸⁵ Hengel, *Acts*, 120-21; Meier, 'Antioch', 38; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 36; Hill, *Hellenists and Hebrews*, 114. P. Watson argues that a Law-free Gentile mission was not formally agreed upon at all; Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 102-03.

Dunn suggests that James thought the decision was an exception to an otherwise unchanged rule, but that he began to change his mind when he saw that Law-free Christians were outnumbering the Law-abiding Christians.¹⁸⁶ Given the Law-abiding figure that James was, it is would have been a remarkable concession to approve a Law-free Gentile mission.

Both Luke and Paul also refer to a third group who are in the Council who explicitly oppose the Law-free Gospel. Paul names them ‘false brothers (ψευδαδελφους) secretly brought in, who crept in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, that they might enslave us’ (Gal. 2:4). Luke describes them as Pharisees (15:5). Given that both accounts attest to the existence of this group, it is unlikely they are fictional. But some have suggested that they stood closer to James and Peter than either Luke or Paul portray.¹⁸⁷ There are some reasonable grounds to place these disciples closer to the pro-circumcision party than either author allows; James’ reputation for loyalty to the Law would suggest he would have promoted a Law-abiding Gospel, and later events (discussed below) also attribute to James a position that Luke and Paul attribute to this third party. Further, as has been noted, both authors have a purpose which would motivate them to distance James and Peter from a Law-abiding position. There are some practical suggestions that have also been put forth; F. C. Baur writes that an external third party would not have had such a strong influence over the apostles on a matter that the apostles disagreed with.¹⁸⁸ Despite the compelling evidence that James’ position matched with that attributed to the third party, many scholars distance the apostle from this group.¹⁸⁹

But James’ position is evident in the Incident at Antioch. Paul writes that not long after the Jerusalem Council, men ‘from James’ (τινας ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου) came to Antioch. The arrival of these men prompted Peter to adhere to Torah and withdraw from dining with Gentiles, keeping himself separate ‘out of fear of the circumcision faction’. As well as Peter, other Jews, including Barnabas started adjusting their actions. Given the results of their arrival, it is implied that these men from James came bearing some kind of message from Jerusalem to not participate in the Law-free activities of the Antiochene church. This is a key point. The arrival of men, claiming to come from James, or who Paul attributed to James, had come delivering a message of adherence to the Torah. But not only for Peter, Barnabas, and the Jews, but to the Gentiles. Paul’s question to Peter signals that he (and by implication, the men from James) compelled Gentiles to practice Judaism (Gal. 2:14). It is also important to highlight that Peter submitted to these men. Given Peter’s

¹⁸⁶ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 445-46, 480.

¹⁸⁷ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 52; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 86.

¹⁸⁸ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 52.

¹⁸⁹ R. E. Brown, ‘Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity,’ *CBQ* 45 (1983), 74-79, 77; Painter, *Just James*, 49; Keener, *Acts, Volume 3*, 2209-10.

exceptionally revered status as the previous leader of the early church, his fear and submission is only explained if someone of great authority was behind the delegates. Only James fills this role.¹⁹⁰

Paul also mentions a ‘circumcision faction’ (τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς). It is not explicit from Paul’s writing whether he means this circumcision faction is the same group of men from James he has just mentioned, though this is the simplest reading of the account. Because of the ambiguous phrasing of the text, there is a tendency to separate James from the circumcision party at Antioch by highlighting that Paul does not explicitly associate the groups.¹⁹¹ J. Painter writes that this is commonly done to minimise the conflict between Paul and James, and to explain that James was not going back on the accord reached at Jerusalem.¹⁹² But many scholars take Paul’s testimony on its simplest reading, and argue that James did send the delegates to Antioch who triggered the actions of Peter and other Jews there.¹⁹³ A distinction between the men from James and the circumcision faction is not warranted from the text, and so it is likely that the men from James and the so-called circumcision faction were actually the same group. Paul describes Peter’s reaction of drawing back as occurring after the arrival of James’ men, *and* out of fear of the circumcision faction. Even if the two were separate groups, Peter’s reaction is shown to be a consequence of both of these parties. Although Paul does not explicitly say that the men from James were the circumcision party, there is a clear connection between the two, and the more likely intended meaning is that they were the same group. Thus, the arrival of men sent by James prompted Peter (and others) to stop living ‘like Gentiles’.

That James sent delegates to Antioch at all prompts some intriguing questions. What could have prompted James to send messengers to Antioch to enforce the Torah? And why would Barnabas and the other teachers have submitted to these men from James? Barnabas, like Paul, had just returned from the Jerusalem Council – what had changed? Had James changed his mind? Had he misunderstood the concession he had given at the council?¹⁹⁴ Or was he enforcing the outcome of the council? Was it that there was no agreement at Jerusalem, and so James was continuing his opposition to the Antiochene Law-free mission? Whatever the details, the departure of Paul indicates that James was victorious at Antioch. Peter, Barnabas, and other leaders of the church there conceded to his demands to obey the Torah, and started enforcing this on the Gentiles in their community as well.

¹⁹⁰ Painter, *Just James*, 69.

¹⁹¹ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 232; Meier, ‘Antioch’, 42; Nanos, ‘Peter’s “Eating with Gentiles” at Antioch’, 291-92.

¹⁹² Painter, *Just James*, 68 n. 31.

¹⁹³ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 38-39; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 2-3; Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul*, 151; Painter, *Just James*, 69; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 87.

¹⁹⁴ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 480, 445-46.

The overall picture of James is consistent: he is one that was loyal to the Law, and tried to keep the Christian movement under the Law as well. While his verdict at the Council of Jerusalem is uncertain, his active role in sending delegates to Antioch to convince the church to ‘practice Judaism’ demonstrates well that he still held that the Torah was an important part of Christian life.

If James held a more conservative position in the events at Jerusalem and Antioch, what can be said of Peter? Despite not being in control at Jerusalem after James’ succession, Peter was still a fundamental part of the Jerusalem Church, and given his close relationship to the Gospel of Matthew, his position is of considerable importance for this study. Fortunately, in light of James’ position being so apparent, Peter’s position can be clarified quickly.

Peter is sometimes seen by scholars as the more liberal, more intermediary figure between James and Paul.¹⁹⁵ He is often hailed as a libertarian because of his dining with the Gentiles in Antioch,¹⁹⁶ or because of his reported agreement that Gentiles did not need to follow the Law.¹⁹⁷ While such a view is understandable while looking at Gal. 2:12a (and Acts 10) the entirety of the scenario needs to be taken into account. In Antioch after the Council, while Peter initially was said to have dined with Gentiles, Paul makes it plain that Peter eventually submitted to the authority of James, changed his behaviour, kept himself separate from Gentiles, and began asking Gentiles to practice Judaism (2:14). Whatever Peter was doing in Antioch at first, by the time Paul departed from that city, Peter had submitted to the will of the men from James, and was preaching a Law-observant gospel.¹⁹⁸ Thus, Peter’s position that Gentiles needed to submit to the Torah is apparent.¹⁹⁹

A slight digression is warranted here. An aspect that is rarely taken into account in considering the positions of James and Peter is what the disciples and Jesus’ family may have learned from the historical Jesus on this very matter, and how this would have carried over into their position on the issues at hand. The evidence indicates that the historical Jesus of Nazareth probably did not promote a relaxation of the Torah,²⁰⁰ and this is most likely the case for several

¹⁹⁵ Brown, ‘Jewish/Gentile Christianity’, 77; W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1966), 339; Segal, ‘Studying Judaism’, 268; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 1060-61.

¹⁹⁶ Koester, ‘Gnomai Diaphoroi’, 121; Hengel, *Acts*, 113.

¹⁹⁷ Bauckham, ‘Gentiles’, 139.

¹⁹⁸ That Peter was a conservative on the Law; Baur, ‘Die Christuspartei’; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 3-4; Painter, *Just James*, 83.

¹⁹⁹ Sim speculates that Peter had a significant role in Antioch after Paul’s departure, thus explaining the later tradition that Peter was the first bishop of Antioch, and explaining why Matthew’s Gospel, written some three decades after these events, would give such prominence to the apostle. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 104.

²⁰⁰ A point widely agreed upon. E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985), 268-69; J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1990), 38-39; Marcus,

key reasons. These are best summarised by D. C. Sim, and his argument has been used for much of the summary here.²⁰¹ First of all, Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew living in a Jewish town and living according to a Jewish lifestyle – it is perfectly conventional that he would be a Law-abiding Jew. Secondly, after Jesus' death, his immediate followers appeared not to have deviated from standard Judaism at all (Acts 1-5). If the Law-free teaching in Paul was genuinely traced back to the historical Jesus, it is a mystery as to why his closest colleagues (i.e. his disciples and family) chose to ignore this advice and continued to live and promote a Law-abiding lifestyle. More incredibly, they decided to not only ignore Jesus' teaching but actively evangelise against it, and argue with Paul and the Hellenists over this very issue. If the case were that Jesus had promoted a relaxation of the Torah, it means that the true gospel message was misunderstood by Jesus' immediate followers (the disciples), *but* properly interpreted by second hand witnesses; the Hellenists and Paul. Why should Paul have understood the teachings of Jesus better than the disciples, especially when Paul himself concedes that he learned about Jesus from one of the disciples in Jerusalem (Gal. 1:14). Such a scenario is then unlikely. That the historical Jesus did not initiate breaking of the Torah actually explains why there was such a significant disagreement in the early church over this very topic. Thus, it is deducible that Jesus' disciples received their Law-abiding gospel from Jesus himself.²⁰²

James and Peter were the two most prominent apostles that were leading the mother church. Whilst Luke and Paul both insist that they approved of a Law-free mission to the Gentiles,

Mark 1-8, 458; D. J. Rudolph, 'Jesus and the Food Laws: A Reassessment of Mark 7:19b,' *EvQ* 74 (2002), 291-311, 293; D. C. Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. D. C. Sim and B. Repschinski (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 155-72, 162-67; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 46-47; J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus: Volume 4: Law and Love* (Garden City: Doubleday, 2009), 342-415; K. B. Larsen, 'Mark 7:1-23: A Pauline Halakah', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 169-87, 174.

²⁰¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 69-70; see also Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 249-50; Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah*, 142, 145; France, *Mark*, 278-79; Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 533.

²⁰² What is also notable is that Paul does not utilise any sayings of Jesus to defend a Law-free gospel for Gentiles. If the historical Jesus *had* broken with the norm and preached against the ritual requirements of the Torah, this would have been a notable and memorable part of his ministry, and if the historical Jesus *had* made any direct statements about abolishing ritual aspects of the Torah, such oral traditions certainly would have been used as evidence at either the Jerusalem Council or the Incident at Antioch, or any of Paul's letters on the subject. But they were not – and probably because such traditions did not exist yet. And if no such oral tradition from Jesus existed at the time of Paul and James, it is almost certain that the historical Jesus did not preach against ritual aspects of the Torah. H. Räisänen is probably right that the sayings later included in Mark's Gospel probably originated within the Law-free church. Rather than originating from the historical Jesus, the first Christian Law-free movements originated decades after Jesus' death, from a group who did not have any direct contact with the historical Jesus, and so could not possibly have gotten their theology from him. This makes it even more likely again that James the brother of Jesus, Peter, and the other disciples and family of Jesus, had continued to keep the Torah just as they did during Jesus' earthly ministry. Räisänen also suggests that the sayings in Mark were possibly inspired by the Pauline wording and theology. Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah*, 145-46. Dunn suggests that Mark radicalised a less controversial saying that pre-dates him. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 51.

both of these authors have obvious reasons to claim that such a mission was sanctioned by these authorities; namely, that Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, and Luke was a direct beneficiary of such a Law-free mission to the Gentiles. Instead, the evidence indicates that these two figures continued to promote a Law-abiding gospel.

1.5 Paul's Independent Missions

After his defeat at Antioch, Paul continued on his Gentile mission, this time independently, and travelled throughout Asia Minor preaching the Law-free gospel. During this independent missionary career of nearly a decade, his disagreements with the Law-abiding gospel seem to have remained unresolved, and there are still indications of conflicting views on Gentile obligations to the Torah. This is most plainly seen in Paul's letter to the Galatians, which was written in response to an event commonly referred to as the Crisis at Galatia, but Paul's other letters contain echoes of a similar pattern of efforts to counter his missions. Events from Paul's post-Antiochene missionary life thus continue to testify to the continuing existence of two different ideas about the Law for Gentiles.

1.5.1 Crisis at Galatia

Paul's letter to the Galatians was occasioned by a crisis in the city. The letter is a direct response to the teaching of an 'alternative gospel' by outsiders to the Galatians (1:6-7), and Paul's anger and concern throughout the letter indicate that the teachers were having some success (1:6; 3:1; 5:10-11).²⁰³ The Galatians letter readily demonstrates that after Paul left Antioch opposition to the Law-free nature of his mission actively followed him. Paul is never explicit about who the teachers of this different gospel are, and he does not make a point to explain what they were preaching, but the letter is defensive enough on some aspects of Paul's teaching that the nature of his opponents' alternative gospel can easily be surmised.

First and foremost, it is clear throughout Paul's letter that he is defending his Law-free gospel and criticising a Law-abiding gospel. From this, it can be comfortably implied that the teachers in Galatia were attacking the Law-free gospel and promoting a Law-abiding gospel. Paul defends his gospel not only by emphasising the importance of faith for salvation (2:16; 3:8, 24-26), but by writing about how futile the Law now was, even criticising the Law outright. He writes that no one is justified by works of the Law (2:15-16), and as his letter goes on his opposition against the Law builds. He claims that Christ died for nothing if salvation is achieved through the Law

²⁰³ J. M. G. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading in a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case', in *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, ed. M. D. Nanos (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 367-82, 380.

(2:21), and then writes that those who rely on the Law were under a curse (3:10). He refers to the Torah as a curse again (3:13), and writes that the Law imprisoned people until faith saved them (3:23). He argues that the Law had a function until Christ came, but now people were no longer subject to it (3:24-26). If they did accept circumcision, then Christ would be of no benefit to them (5:2); circumcision did not count for anything in Christ Jesus; the only thing that counted was faith (5:6). Some smaller aspects of the teachers' Law-abiding gospel are also evident from the letter, for example it is clear that the teachers were convincing people to become circumcised (5:2; 6:12), as Paul speaks out explicitly against this practice. It is also possible that Paul's opponents used the example of Abraham in their case for a Law-abiding gospel, as Paul takes up this example himself.²⁰⁴ Thus Paul's arguments from within the letter itself can indicate that the new Teachers in Galatia were encouraging the Galatians to be circumcised and start adhering to the Law, and claiming that this was the way to achieve salvation.

The second noticeable defence of Paul's letter is that he makes a point of insisting that his gospel was not received from men, but from God. This is evident from the opening line, where Paul parts with epistolary convention, and insists immediately upon his introduction that he was 'sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father' (1:1). Paul is also at pains to minimise the contact he has ever had with the apostles in the time after his conversion. At the beginning of his letter he details his exact relationship with the apostles in Jerusalem; he insists that upon his calling from God he 'did not confer with any human being, nor did [he] go up to Jerusalem' (1:16-17), instead he went to Arabia and Damascus. When he did go to Jerusalem a few years later, he stayed with Peter for fifteen days, and aside from James, he saw no other apostle (1:18-19). He abruptly finishes his account to insist that he is not lying (1:20). The defensive nature of this testimony demonstrates that Paul is addressing claims that have been put forward to the Galatians; namely, that Paul received his gospel from the apostles.²⁰⁵ At the same time, Paul was trying to show that these apostles approved of his gospel. This is clear in his retelling of the Council of Jerusalem (2:7-9). But while he subtly acknowledges the apostles' authority, he immediately claims that he did not need it (2:6).

²⁰⁴ As J. L. Martyn points out, Paul's arguments about Gen. 15:6 in Gal. 3:6-7 show that his focus at this point in the letter was on the descendants of Abraham – an idea not warranted by the Genesis text itself, which speaks only of belief and righteousness. As such, Martyn argues that the Teachers in Galatia must have been referring to the descendants of Abraham in their message, which prompted Paul to use the same figure for his own case Martyn, 'Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles', 318. Elsewhere in the letter, Paul uses citations from Scripture and the example of Abraham to claim that God promised salvation by faith to the Gentiles through Abraham hundreds of years before the Torah, and so this initial promise is what is important, not the act of circumcision that accompanied it (3:6-9; 17-18, 29; 4:21-31).

²⁰⁵ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 98; R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), xcvi; Dunn, *Galatians*, 26; Martyn, *Galatians*, 94; Sim, 'Appearances', 5.

A third (and related) aspect of Paul's argument is his defence of his apostleship (Gal. 1:1; 11-12). These statements make clear that Paul's opponents were specifically criticising Paul as a figure. It is important to note that in defending his credibility and independence as an apostle, Paul is also defending the credibility of his gospel itself. Paul defends the divine authority he has received to preach his gospel among the Gentiles (1:16),²⁰⁶ and insists that the apostles approved of his mission also (2:7-10). Whilst insisting that this gospel was sourced directly from God, and not from the apostles, Paul also tries to assure the Galatians that the apostles had approved of his mission to the Gentiles (2:7-10).

From here, the details of the opponents' message are uncertain. It is possible that Paul's opponents considered him to be an 'unreliable delegate of the Jerusalem Church'.²⁰⁷ It is possible that the opponents did not believe Paul's claim that Christ had independently called him to a mission to the Gentiles.²⁰⁸ It is also possible that Paul felt the need to clarify his relationship with the apostles, and this indicates that the teachers in Galatia were also claiming a relationship to them.²⁰⁹ Or that the opponents claimed that Paul had acknowledged the authority of the Jerusalem apostles by laying his gospel before them for their approval (2:2, 4-6, 6-9).²¹⁰ Though the exact argument of the opponents' message about the Jerusalem disciples is uncertain, what is evident is that it was being reported that the apostles in Jerusalem disagreed with the gospel that Paul had taught in Galatia.

Paul's recounting of the Jerusalem Council and the Incident at Antioch are also telling inclusions in the defence of his gospel. The Council relates directly to the issue at hand – whether Gentiles should need to follow the Law – but it is more likely that Paul is relaying his own version of events because his opponents had used the same events in their attack on his gospel.²¹¹ And further, their version that did not cast him in a good light. Again, beyond this is speculation. Possibly they said that Paul agreed to cease his Gentile mission at the Council. Possibly, they said that Paul's mission was not approved by the apostles (thus his repeat of the confirmation in 2:7-10). And their version of the Incident at Antioch could have emphasised Paul's defeat and the triumph of James and Peter's Law-abiding gospel.

The opponents at Galatia are not identified by Paul, but the evidence indicates that they were Christians (by Paul's description of their teaching as 'gospel' (εὐαγγέλιον) in 1:6-9), and that

²⁰⁶ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 1.

²⁰⁷ Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading', 379.

²⁰⁸ Sim, 'Appearances', 11.

²⁰⁹ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 1.

²¹⁰ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 728.

²¹¹ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 2.

they were Law-abiding (6:13).²¹² It is also apparent that they actively promoted a Law-abiding gospel to the Galatians, which included circumcision (3:1-5; 5:1-2). J. L. Martyn notes that Paul addresses the teachers as separate from the Galatian congregation (1:7; 2:4; 6:13), thus, Martyn rightfully concludes these teachers have come externally.²¹³ But can anything further be deduced?

Some suggest that the opponents in Galatia heralded from the Jerusalem Church.²¹⁴ Their references to the apostles as the proper authority could indicate that they either came from Jerusalem, or claimed to represent Jerusalem. G. Luedemann suggests that the opponents were identical with the ‘false brothers’ at the Council of Jerusalem,²¹⁵ but I. J. Elmer suggests that this was precisely what Paul was *attempting* to do in an effort to discredit his opponents.²¹⁶ J. M. G. Barclay writes that the constant references to Jerusalem make it probable that they had links with the Jerusalem Church, but it is also possible that they were from Antioch or any church that had Law-abiding Christians, adding that it is ‘inconceivable’ that the apostles commissioned Paul’s opponents.²¹⁷ J. D. G. Dunn proposes that the opponents were from the church in Antioch and were trying to claim their former churches for their new Law-abiding Christianity.²¹⁸ R. E. Brown says that Paul’s opponents in Galatia belonged to a separate, more conservative group than did Peter and James.²¹⁹ While it is possible to claim that the Galatian opponents were in some way linked to the Jerusalem Church, there is no key piece of evidence that makes it probable, as opposed to possible. But whether or not the teachers had travelled to Galatia from Jerusalem with or without the authorisation of the apostles, there are indications that they claimed that they had or *would have* had the backing of the original apostles.²²⁰ As such, they probably claimed to be telling the proper and authorised gospel that was approved by the disciples in Jerusalem.

Paul seems to have eventually lost the Galatians to his opponents. In 1 Cor. 16:1-2, Paul wrote that he had written to Galatia with instructions for the collection for the saints. But his subsequent mentions of the collection do not include reference to Galatia at all (2 Cor. 9:2-4; Rom.

²¹² That the opponents at Galatia were Law-abiding is a fairly widespread position; Martyn, ‘Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles’, 312-13; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 99; Longenecker, *Galatians*, xcv; Barclay, ‘Mirror-Reading’, 378; Dunn, *Galatians*, 9-10. Alternatively, M. D. Nanos writes that they were probably non-Christian Jews; Nanos, ‘Inter- and Intra-Jewish’, 405.

²¹³ Martyn, ‘Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles’, 227.

²¹⁴ Watson, *Paul, Judaism, and the Gentiles*, 59-61; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 34; P. F. Esler, *Galatians* (London: Routledge, 1998), 74, 137-38; Martyn, *Galatians*, 459-66; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 101; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 1.

²¹⁵ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 101.

²¹⁶ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 162.

²¹⁷ Barclay, ‘Mirror-Reading’, 380.

²¹⁸ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 720-21. So too Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul*, 193-94.

²¹⁹ Brown, ‘Jewish/Gentile Christianity’, 77.

²²⁰ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 722. G. Luedemann writes that it is not clear whether the opponents had the backing of Jerusalem, but Paul was trying to make sure that this was not seen to be the case. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 101.

15:26).²²¹ As such, it seems that Paul's opponents were ultimately successful in overcoming Paul's Law-free gospel in that city. To what extent this incoming Law-abiding Gentile mission in Galatia existed purely as a reaction to Paul's Law-free mission is difficult to say, but given that their message seemed to strongly critique Paul, there is every possibility that this was the case. Paul's letter to the Galatians thus strongly demonstrates that there existed alongside Paul's Law-free mission, a concurrent and competing Law-abiding mission to the Gentiles.

1.5.2 Other Pauline letters

Galatians is by far the strongest evidence of the attempts at dissuading the Law-free Gentile churches of Paul, but there are possible indications of similar efforts in other Pauline letters. There is evidence in 1 and 2 Corinthians that the community at Corinth was subject to Law-abiding Pauline opponents, and Paul warns the church at Philippi to be aware of such teachers.

Turning first to Paul's opponents at Corinth. The opponents in both letters are Law-abiding, and while there was some short time between the composition of 1 and 2 Corinthians, it is reasonable to assume that the opponents mentioned in the first letter have carried on their opposition into the time of the second letter, thus indicating that the matter continued in the city for some years. In 1 Corinthians, the first matter Paul addresses is division within the community (1:10-31). Paul recounts that some Corinthians were declaring loyalty to Paul, while others declare loyalty to Cephas, still others to Apollos and even to Christ. This division is affecting the community and causing quarrels amongst them. That this is the forerunning issue of Paul's lengthy letter indicates the importance Paul gives to the issue. F. C. Baur was the first to propose that the groups claiming loyalty to Paul and Cephas fell along Petrine-Pauline rivalry lines,²²² and this position has been echoed since.²²³ Various elaborations have been suggested beyond this information; C. K. Barrett suggests that the Cephas party was possibly started by Peter himself,²²⁴ and there is an argument that Peter was personally known to the community at Corinth as Paul refers to him and his wife in defending his own apostleship (1 Cor. 9:5).²²⁵ J. Murphy-O'Connor writes that Paul categorised this group with Cephas merely symbolically, as (for Paul) Peter was the symbol of Judaisers for him.²²⁶ Dunn proposes that the already existing Cephas group would

²²¹ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 745.

²²² Baur, *Paul, Volume One*, 259-65; Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 61.

²²³ C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Second ed. (London: A&C Black, 1971), 44; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 76-78; Painter, *Just James*, 83; M. D. Goulder, *Paul and the Competing Mission in Corinth* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2001), 16-32, 227; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaisers*, 168-75; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 840.

²²⁴ Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 44; also explored in C. K. Barrett, *Essays on Paul* (London: SPCK, 1982), 32-34.

²²⁵ Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 32.

²²⁶ Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 277.

have been an in-point for external Judaisers.²²⁷ Paul does not elaborate on the division, only earnestly calling for the community's unity (1 Cor. 3).

Later in the letter, Paul is forced to defend his apostleship (1 Cor. 9:1-18). This pericope seems to be a direct response to an accusation, as Paul writes that this was his defence to the ones examining him (τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρίνουσίν; 9:3). While Paul does not identify his opponents in this instance, his language once again indicates that they come from outside the community, as he distinguishes between the Corinthians and his critics (9:2).²²⁸ Paul's defence also indicates that there were circulating accusations that he was not a real apostle (9:2), and about his reliance on the support of his churches (9:4-12). Some scholars have made the connection between the earlier mentioned Cephas party and those who criticise Paul's apostleship;²²⁹ Paul comparing himself to Cephas in 9:5 could indicate that he was being compared to Peter while his apostleship was being attacked. Paul's struggle for the legitimacy of his apostleship is possibly also seen later where Paul recounts a creedal formula of Jesus' appearances to 'all the apostles' (1 Cor. 15:3-9), and adds his own ending that includes himself as a witness to the resurrected Jesus (15:8-9).²³⁰ While the tradition excluded Paul from the list of resurrection appearances from Christ, Paul insists on his own legitimacy by adding himself to the list of witnesses. He also insists that he worked harder than any of the other apostles (15:10).

Paul's credibility as an apostle is again under attack in 2 Corinthians, and significantly more so on this occasion. Paul writes that the Corinthians had been exposed to a 'different gospel' (11:3-5), one that was leading them away from pure devotion to Christ. Paul describes the agents of this different gospel as 'super apostles' (ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων)²³¹ and insists that he is in no way inferior to them. These super-apostles may have relied on the congregational funds of the Corinthians because Paul defends his decision to not rely on their charity for his missionary expenses (11:7-11). He writes that he would continue to spread the gospel in order to deny the success of those who want to be his equal (11:12). 'Such boasters', he writes, 'are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ... even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light' (11:13-14). Based on the heavy critique from Paul in 11:13-15, many scholars say

²²⁷ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 840.

²²⁸ Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaisers*, 172.

²²⁹ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 79; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 35; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaisers*, 172-75.

²³⁰ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 76-77.

²³¹ Exactly what Paul means by 'super apostles' is not clear. But the term fits in with Paul's frequent use of compound words that begin with a the ὑπερ preposition in 1 Cor.; 1:8; 3:10; 4:7, 17 (twice), 7:4; 9:14; 10:14, 16; 11:5, 23; 12:7 (three times), 11. G. H. Guthrie, *2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 516, n. 7.

that that Paul's opponents here could not possibly be the Jerusalem apostles,²³² and there is some evidence that Paul would have refrained from criticising the disciples in this manner, namely, his desire for reconciliation in the collection he had only written about in 2 Cor. 8-9. But some do conclude that Paul's opponents in Corinth were similar to those in Jerusalem and Antioch.²³³

For the most part, there is little that is certain about Paul's critics in Corinth. There is no suggestion in either letter about what Paul found to be objectionable with this different gospel.²³⁴ It is clear that some had criticised Paul, and from Paul's response it can be surmised that he has been accused of being a weak speaker (11:5-6) and of evangelising for free (11:7),²³⁵ but none of this is particularly revealing about the gospel of his Corinthian opponents. It is possible that Paul is revealing something about his opponents when he insists that he too (καγώ) is Hebrew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, and a minister of Christ (11:22).²³⁶ As such, it is possible that Paul's opponents here were Law-abiding Christians. This draws some interesting similarities with Paul's opponents at Galatia, and Dunn notes that Paul's references to a different gospel and the seed of Abraham parallel Paul's language in Galatians (Gal. 1:6; 3:6-18), and the opponents' claims that they are 'ministers of righteousness' (διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης, 11:15) also recalls Paul's rhetoric in Galatians (2:21; 3:6, 11, 21).²³⁷ But, importantly, Paul does not mention his Law-free Gentile mission at all, and so it is not at all evident that these opponents were preaching a Law-abiding gospel.

From the available evidence it can be deduced that Paul had opponents in Corinth who were Christian Jews, who were attacking his apostleship, and who were a considerable authority in themselves. Peter is mentioned by name twice in 1 Corinthians, and this is possibly in relation to his opponents, and so there is a possibility that Paul's opponents associated themselves with Peter. Even though none of the evidence in 2 Corinthians mentions Peter by name, or the apostles directly, given that it was written so close to 1 Corinthians where Peter is named, is important to note. It is also relevant to here mention the often-noted reference is Paul's sarcastic comment about needing letters of recommendation (3:1), as his opponents have. The identity of those who

²³² C. K. Barrett, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Continuum International, 1986), 277; M. E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 671-75; Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 516.

²³³ Goulder, *Competing Mission*, 4; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 839-40; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 177.

²³⁴ Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 510.

²³⁵ Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 514-23.

²³⁶ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 839.

²³⁷ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 838.

authorised Paul's opponents is relevant here, as it is sometimes suggested that these can only be the Jerusalem apostles.²³⁸

While it is evident that Paul had consistent problems with opponents in his Corinthian Church, there is no evidence that a Law-abiding gospel was in any way a part of their message. Paul does not raise the issue of the Law or his Gentile mission once in both letters.²³⁹ Given the outrage that is evident when Paul learned of Law-abiding missionaries in Galatia, it is unlikely that he would have not commented on the same efforts in another Church. And while scholars have explained this away in various ways,²⁴⁰ there is simply no evidence that there were Law-abiding preachers in Corinth. The significance of the Corinthian opponents can be seen as part of a larger picture of efforts against Paul more generally, but there is no indication from Paul's letters there that the Law and the Gentile mission were the topics of contention.

Paul's letter to the Philippians more strongly demonstrates the consistent Law-abiding efforts that followed him during his independent missions. Paul's letter to the church at Philippi is one of his most positive. Unlike Galatians and Corinthians, Paul is not writing to scold the Philippians, instead he is rejoicing in his life work, in the work of the Philippian community, and in the grace of Christ. But Paul's letter does contain hints of tension. Paul writes about those who proclaim the gospel not from love and goodwill, but from envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition (1:15-18). He does not elaborate on who these teachers are, but in a most un-Pauline fashion, he lightly dismisses these concerns, saying that it mattered not; he only rejoices that Christ is being proclaimed everywhere (1:18).

Most significant for this discussion is Paul's warning to the Philippians in 3:2-6 of those who mutilate (τὴν κατατομήν, denoting circumcision); these 'dogs' and 'evil workers' are not yet with the Philippians, but his need to warn them of their possible approach is telling. Real circumcision is of the Spirit, Paul writes, and he has no confidence in the flesh; though he had been circumcised on the eighth day (cf. Lev. 12:3), he now regards any righteousness he had under the Law as worthless in light of the new righteousness he has in Christ (3:7-9). Helpfully, the identity of those whom Paul warns of is apparent; they are Law-abiding Christians.²⁴¹ He makes no

²³⁸ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 64; Goulder, *Competing Mission*, 81-83; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 841-42; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 177.

²³⁹ On the topic of food offered to idols (1 Cor. 8-10), Paul himself makes the Gentile origins of this controversy clear (8:7). See G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 59.

²⁴⁰ J. D. G. Dunn says this is a reflection of greater subtlety on Paul's part; see Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 840. F. C. Baur suggests that the main point of attack from the opponents was on Paul's apostleship. See Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 61.

²⁴¹ A common position. See Koester, 'Gnomai Diaphoroi', 147; R. P. Martin, *Philippians* (London: Oliphants, 1976), 29; H. Räisänen, 'Paul's Conversion and the Development of His View of the Law,'

connection to the apostles, or to Jerusalem or Galatia, but he is plain that some may come to Philippi to proclaim righteousness by the Law and by circumcision. Paul was possibly anticipating the same opponents he had experienced previously in other churches, which indicates that there was a persistent strategy to counter his Law-free gospel.

Paul's tension with the Law-abiding Jerusalem Church is possibly also demonstrated in the fate of his collection for the poor at Jerusalem. Paul actively campaigns for the collection of funds in several of his letters (Rom. 15:25-32; 1 Cor. 16:1-41 2 Cor. 8-9),²⁴² and he encourages his churches to be generous in giving to the collection. But Paul's letters suggest that the collection is more than just an act of charity, it is a symbol of acceptance from the apostles (Rom. 15:31),²⁴³ and Paul even was worried that his collection would not be accepted (Rom. 15:31). This is possibly also reflected in his change of plans for delivering the funds; in 1 Cor. 16:3 Paul wrote about sending delegates to Jerusalem to deliver the collection, but in Rom. 15:31-32 Paul writes that he plans to deliver the funds himself.²⁴⁴ There are no existing Pauline letters that were written after his final trip to Jerusalem, and so there is no evidence from Paul as to the fate of his collection. Luke does recount Paul's final trip to Jerusalem, where he meets with James, but in his narrative Paul is eventually arrested and tried (Acts 21:17 onwards). What is notable by its complete absence in Acts is the collection. Luke does not refer to a collection at all in his text. The only potential mention of it is during Paul's defence to Felix, where he mentions that he came to Jerusalem to bring alms and sacrifices (24:17). Luke's omission of the collection could be explained in several ways; for example perhaps he did not know about it, or perhaps Paul did not offer the collection after all. But some take Luke's silence to mean that Paul's collection was not accepted by the apostles.²⁴⁵ If indeed Paul's meagre collection was not accepted, it firmly demonstrates that he and his Law-free Gentile missions and ministry were not accepted by the Jerusalem Church, even up to his death.

NTS 33 (1987), 404-19, 408; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 105-06; I. H. Marshall, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (London: Epworth Press, 1991), 75; D. A. Hagner, 'Jewish Christianity', in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament*, ed. R. P. Martin and P. H. Davids (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 579-87, 586; B. B. Thurston and J. M. Ryan, *Philippians and Philemon* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 114-15, 119; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 196.

²⁴² J. Martyn suggests that Paul wrote another letter to the Galatians outlining how they should save for the collection (indicated in 1 Cor. 16:1-2). Martyn, *Galatians*, 226.

²⁴³ Baur, *Church History, Volume 1*, 75; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 59; Painter, *Just James*, 54; Martyn, *Galatians*, 224; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 935, 44; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 205-06.

²⁴⁴ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 60.

²⁴⁵ Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 60-61; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 168; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 972; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem, and the Judaizers*, 209-10. J. Painter writes that it cannot be known if it was accepted; Painter, *Just James*, 54.

The missionary work of Paul was wide-ranging and successful, but his letters demonstrate that he was quite consistently followed by opposing groups who preached a Law-abiding Gentile gospel, or who preached against Paul's status as an apostle, or sometimes both. It is difficult to say whether those who criticised Paul's apostleship did so as a reaction to his Gentile mission, or whether there was another element of his missionary career that they did not agree with. But Paul's letters testify to the existence of conflicting ideas in the earliest church in relation to Gentiles and the Law. He experienced consistent efforts from Law-abiding Christian groups to bring his Gentile converts to a different gospel. The Pauline letters also give some evidence on what Law-observant Christians thought of Paul; it is likely that they denied his status as an apostle, thus denying his authority, the authority his gospel was based on, and so their disagreement with his theology.

While Paul continued to experience opposition to his Law-free Gospel, it is not necessary that these oppositional forces beyond the Incident at Antioch came from apostles in the Jerusalem Church. It is possible that they were, and that there was a widespread campaign from Jerusalem to counteract Paul's missions throughout Greece and Asia Minor, but the evidence does not point to this exclusively. Given that it is likely that they held different views to Paul on the topic and stopped him in Antioch on two occasions, it is possible that there would be a continuation of these efforts after Paul's departure from Antioch. But this is not the only scenario that explains the surviving evidence. What is certain is that for years after the Jerusalem Council and the Incident at Antioch conflicting ideas continued to exist in the early church about Gentile adherence to the Torah.

1.6 The Gospel Era

Turning now to the period following the deaths of Paul and James, and continuing evidence of different ideas on Gentiles and the Law is available. This is the era in which the Gospels were composed, and it will later be argued in detail that Mark and Matthew themselves demonstrate the different ideas, but leaving Mark and Matthew to one side for the moment, other documents testify that there was no agreement or consolidation on the question of the Torah for Gentile converts. While none of the following examples refers specifically to *Gentiles* and their obligations to the Law, the debates instead circulate around the general relevance of the Law for all Christians, and there is a continuation of the same patterns of criticism against Paul that were seen during Paul's independent missions.

1.6.1 Pauline Opponents in Acts

Acts has been used as a source previously in this chapter because it deals with events of the 30s, 40s, and 50s CE, but as it was written in the latter part of the first century it is also useful for analysing the era in which it was written. Some have argued that Acts was, at least partially, written as a defence of Paul.²⁴⁶ A lot of the last third of the text is dedicated to a narrative of Paul's arrest and repeated trials after he is accused of teaching against the Jewish Law (21:21-26:32). Luke's inclusion of such extensive trials is interesting. They may have been included as a reflection of the historical reality of the end of Paul's actual life, but Luke does not tell of Paul's death, merely ending with his arrival in Rome (28:11-31). As such there was no narrative need to include the trials in the Acts story. Nor does Luke's narrative have anything to gain from the account. Instead, it is likely that Luke was here defending Paul from accusations that were circling in Luke's own time, and in response to such criticism, had given Paul a platform from which to explicitly defend himself against the charges.

The charges Paul faces in Acts primarily are about his breach of the Law or other important aspects of the Jewish faith (21:20-21, 28; 23:29). Paul defends himself against such claims throughout his trials; he does this by explicitly denying the charges (24:10-21; 25:8, 10; 26:2-7), emphasising his Jewish identity and ancestry (21:39; 22:3-4, 14; 23:6; 26:4-5), and emphasising that he adheres to ritualistic aspects of the Torah (24:11-12, 17-18). Luke elsewhere demonstrates that Paul is innocent of these charges; from the start, he explains that the perception that Paul let a Gentile into the Temple was a mistake (21:29), he presents Paul's accusers as an unruly and angry mob (21:30-31, 34-35; 22:23; 23:12-28; 25:1-3), and the Roman authorities are consistently agreeing that Paul has done no wrong (23:29; 25:25). Luke also presents Paul as a Law-abiding Jew throughout the Acts narrative (16:3; 21:21-27, 39; 22:2-3, 17; 23:5; 24:14), even though it is unlikely that Paul himself continued to follow the ritualistic aspects of the Torah in the Christian days of his life (Rom. 6:1-23; 7:6; 10:4; 1 Cor. 9:20-21; Gal. 2:19; 5:11, 18; Phil. 3:8).²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ That a major purpose of Acts was to defend Paul see especially C. S. Keener, 'Paul and Sedition: Pauline Apologetic in Acts,' *BBR* 22 (2012), 201-24. See also Baur, *Paul, Volume One*, 6-8; J. Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972), 153-54; G. W. Hansen, 'The Preaching and Defence of Paul', in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, ed. I. H. Marshall and D. Peterson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 295-324, 317-24; C. S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Volume One* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 222-24. J.C. Beker has pointed out that Paul's major purpose is not an apology for Paul, rather Paul is the instrument of Luke's foremost agenda; the Spirit-guided journey of the Church. See J. C. Beker, *Heirs of Paul: Paul's Legacy in the New Testament and in the Church Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 49-50; also L. T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992), 7-8. But this agenda alone does not explain the lengthy trial Paul receives in the narrative. There is no doubt that Luke's primary agenda was a Spirit-led church, but a defence of Paul is also clear from the text.

²⁴⁷ Although lately this consensus is being challenged. See Nanos and Zetterholm, *Paul within Judaism*, 1-30. Also Fredriksen, 'Law-Free Apostle', 637-39.

Alongside these accusations of going against Judaism, Paul is also accused of sedition (24:5), another accusation from which he defends himself (25:8). Given the seriousness of the accusation, it is likely that Paul was either historically charged with the offence, or was still being accused of it in Luke's time, or both. It is unlikely that Luke would have invented charges against his story's hero; instead Paul had charges that needed to be answered.²⁴⁸ These types of allegations against Paul must have been strong in Luke's time, strong enough for Luke to include them in his apologetic narrative, but tell them in a way that ensures Paul's innocence.²⁴⁹

The identity of Paul's accusers in *Luke's* time is less clear. Paul's accusers in Acts are explicitly Jewish (21:11; 22:30; 23:12, 20, 26; 24:9; 25:7; 26:2; 28:19), but if Luke's account of Paul's trial is completely reflective of his contemporary situation, then Paul's opponents in Luke's time appear to be non-Christian Jews who have taken offence at Paul's teachings against the Law, Moses, and the Temple. But would Luke's community have had to deny accusations about Paul that originated from non-Christian Jews? Would Luke (or even Paul) have had troubles with non-Christian Jewish communities? Given that Luke lived outside of Jerusalem and Judea, and that he was a Gentile writer who wrote for Gentiles, it is unlikely that non-Christian Jews would have caused trouble for a non-Jewish group. The most commonly held view is that Paul's opponents in Luke's time were from Law-abiding Christians.²⁵⁰ It is more likely that such a group would have criticised Paul, and this is supported by taking into account the full historical context of Pauline opposition, which sees a consistent pattern of Law-abiding Christians attempting to counter Paul's missions.

The accusations against Paul in Acts thus could demonstrate that Paul's teaching on the Law was still being disputed decades after his death. That Luke dedicates so much room to Paul's trial and defence on these issues indicates that these accusations were significant and persistent enough for Luke to warrant such an explicit and extensive defence. The charges of sedition against Paul also fit in with earlier efforts to discredit Paul, which was primarily done in further effort to discredit his Law-free gospel. These accusations were probably still being put forward by Law-abiding Christians during Luke's time of writing, even though Paul had died some time before.

²⁴⁸ Keener, 'Paul and Sedition', 201.

²⁴⁹ Keener, 'Paul and Sedition', 207-08.

²⁵⁰ See Baur, *Paul, Volume One*, 12; S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church: A Study of the Effects of the Jewish Overthrow of A.D. 70 on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1957), 210, 212 (who, curiously, thinks that these Christian Jews were based in Alexandria); Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 52-63; Beker, *Heirs of Paul*, 57; B. Rapske, 'Opposition to the Plan of God and Persecution', in *Witness to the Gospel: Theology of Acts*, ed. I. H. Marshall and D. Peterson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 235-56, 244-45; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 963.

This scenario fits in with the trend seen during Paul's lifetime, when Law-abiding Christians evangelised to Law-free churches in Antioch, Galatia, and Corinth, and were at least expected in Philippi.

1.6.2 The Pastoral Epistles

Evidence for a continuing debate around the issue of obedience to the Law is also evident in the Pastoral Epistles. These three canonical letters were addressed not to communities but to individuals; two to Timothy in Ephesus, and one to Titus in Crete. These epistles were written in Paul's name but almost certainly not written by Paul himself, but the letters are widely believed to be from the hand of a single author,²⁵¹ and so should be dealt with as a group. Dating these letters is no certain task, and suggestions vary widely; from soon after Paul's death,²⁵² to the early second century,²⁵³ But, fundamentally, it matters not whether they were written earlier or later, they still add to the ever building story of continuing disagreement between Law-free and Law-abiding gospels in the first century.

Opponents within the communities of Ephesus and Crete are evident from the letters addressed there. They seem to be a particularly urgent issue in 1 Timothy, where those who preach a 'different doctrine' are brought up immediately after introductions and blessings (1 Tim. 1:3). These opponents, as well as occupying themselves with myths and genealogies (1:4), also desire to be 'teachers of the Law' (νομοδιδάσκαλος; 1:7), though the author claims that they do not understand the Law (1:8-11). Later in the letter, the author refers to those who have renounced the faith and listened to 'deceitful teachings' (4:1); these people, he writes, forbid marriage, require refraining from certain foods, 'which God created to be received with thanksgiving... for everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected'. (4:3-4). In 2 Timothy, the author warns against those who have 'swerved from the truth' (2 Tim. 2:18)

²⁵¹ G. W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 4; I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: T&T Clark, 1999), 1; L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 2001), 14.

²⁵² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 92.

²⁵³ R. I. Pervo, 'Pastoral Epistles', in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. D. N. Freedman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1014-15. Other suggestions include; 80-90 CE (B. Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), 20); 75-95CE (J. J. Gunther, *St Paul's Opponents and Their Background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 17); 'the end of the first century' R. Saarinen, *The Pastoral Epistles with Philemon and Jude* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008), 23; also Beker, *Heirs of Paul*, 36); 70-100 CE; J. D. Quinn, 'Timothy and Titus, Epistles To', in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (Garden City: Doubleday, 1992), 560-71, 568.

Similar concerns are brought up in the epistle to Titus. The author talks of ‘rebellious people, idle talkers, and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision’. These people, the author writes, must be silenced, as their teaching is only for their own gain and is causing upset (1:10-12). He cites one of their prophets, and uses their own teaching against them, before saying that they should not pay attention to ‘Jewish myths or to commandments of those who reject the truth’ (1:14). These people ‘profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work’ (1:16). Later, the author warns Titus to avoid ‘quarrels about the Law’, and to have ‘nothing to do with anyone who causes divisions’ (3:9-10).

It is unknown how many opponents Pauline communities were facing in this time; whether one or several. While there are clear references to Jews (Titus 1:10,²⁵⁴ 14; also 1 Tim. 1:7), some passages have been linked to Gnostic beliefs (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:18).²⁵⁵ Whatever the case, it is clear that at least part of the opposition to Pauline communities was coming from Jewish groups because they promoted the Law, circumcision, and other aspects of Jewish tradition. Once again, the groups were probably not non-Christian Jews, because non-Christian Jews would probably not concern themselves with the beliefs of Gentile churches. Instead, it is more likely that those in Ephesus and Crete who were debating the Law, and claiming to be teachers of the Law, were Law-abiding Christians.²⁵⁶

The Pastoral Epistles thus provide evidence that after Paul’s death, at least one movement within Pauline communities was causing friction over their use and interpretation of the Jewish Law. Some who claimed to be teachers of the Law were teaching a different doctrine (1 Tim. 1:3-11), and that others (or the same ones) who debate the Law are causing divisions (Titus 3:9-10). Such teachings, the author writes, are wrong (1 Tim. 1:3-11; Titus 1:10-16). Interestingly, subtle hints of the success of the opposing movement are also seen throughout the letters (1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:16; 4:1-4). Once again, there is evidence of a Law-abiding group causing conflict within a Pauline community over their teaching towards the Law. The Pastoral Epistles are thus testimony to a continued tension between Law-free and Law-abiding Christians.

1.6.3 The Letter of James

Turning now for the first time to a Law-abiding Christian text, the Epistle of James. Much ink has been spilled over the question of the authorship and subsequent date of this epistle and it cannot be

²⁵⁴ Obviously circumcision was a unique and central part of Jewish identity in the Gentile world. J. J. Gunther points out that elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, circumcision directly signifies Jews and Hebrew believers; Rom. 4:12; Acts 10:45; 11:2; Gal. 2:12; Col. 4:11. Gunther, *St Paul’s Opponents*, 77.

²⁵⁵ F. C. Baur argued that particularly, the Marcionite doctrine of Gnosticism is evident. Baur, *Paul, Volume Two*, 99-100.

²⁵⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 51.

said truthfully that one argument has a consensus in scholarship. A large group claim that the epistle was truly written by the historical James, brother of Jesus, and so written around the 50s CE.²⁵⁷ However, an equally large group suggests that the document is pseudonymous, and thus date the text anywhere from 80 CE to 150 CE.²⁵⁸ It is more likely that the author of the Letter of James was not James himself,²⁵⁹ and thus was more likely written after James had died. As such, the epistle will here be used as a witness to the continuing conflict against Paul in Law-abiding circles after Paul's death. But even if this was not the case, and the historical James did pen the letter, the below discussion only supports earlier conclusions about the Law-based theology of James.

The letter is most likely written from within a Law-abiding Christian community. That the author of the letter is a Christian goes without saying (1:1; 2:1),²⁶⁰ but the author is also Jewish, as evident by the frequent citations of Scripture (2:8, 23; 4:5), reference to the basic Jewish article of faith (2:19), the anointing of the sick with oil (5:14-15), to Abraham and Rahab (2:25), the prophets (5:10), Job (5:11), and Elijah (5:17).²⁶¹ The epistle covers all manner of topics from the poor to reward for suffering, but James' letter is most well-known for its works-based theology. This subject is only a focus for a small part of the letter (2:8-26; also 1:22-25), but it has historically received the most attention due to its message that faith on its own does not save. The author does not equate these works with the Torah (as Paul did; Rom. 3:27), but it is his criticism of a faith-only theology that is important. The author does not name a specific target, but given Paul's well-known *sola fide* theology (Rom. 3:22, 27-28; 10:9-10; Gal. 3:11, 22) it is likely that

²⁵⁷ A short sample of the most modern scholars would include; R. W. Wall, 'James, Letter Of', in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, ed. R. P. Martin and P. H. Davids (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 545-61546-47; D. J. Moo, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 20-22; P. J. Hartin, *James* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003), 16-24; W. F. Brosend II, *James and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4-5; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 1123-29; S. McKnight, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 13-38. L. T. Johnson acknowledges that it cannot be known for sure if the historical James wrote this letter, but he supports an early dating and authorship by an early Palestinian Christian Jewish source, and that James 'is a reasonable candidate'. L. T. Johnson, *The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1995), 118-21. D. G. McCartney does not explicitly say it, but argues that 'several lines of evidence converge' on taking the letter at its own claim that James himself wrote the letter. D. G. McCartney, *James* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 30-32.

²⁵⁸ M. Dibelius, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, trans. M. A. Williams (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 18-19; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 140; D. C. Allison, *James: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 3-32. An exhaustive list can be found in Allison, *James*, 4 n. 18, 19.

²⁵⁹ For convenience's sake, the author will continue to be referred to as James.

²⁶⁰ The letter is (sometimes notoriously) renowned for its light treatment of Christology or any other Christian motifs, and Hartin writes that James' strong theology (as opposed to Christology) demonstrates the letter's strong Jewish foundation; 'There is nothing in the thought and vision of this short letter that is not at home in that world'. See Hartin, *James*, 5.

²⁶¹ T. Carson, 'James', in *New International Bible Commentary*, ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 1533-49, 1533. Identifying the audience as 'the twelve tribes in the Diaspora' also indicates that the author is writing to his fellow Jewish Christian audiences, although this could have been used in a metaphorical sense. See Wall, 'James', 548-49.

this portion of James' letter is intended as a critique of this characteristically Pauline line of thinking. James explicitly opposes the idea of salvation by faith alone (Jas. 2:14, 17). He acknowledges the importance of faith, but insists that 'faith was brought to completion by works' (2:22).

That the author of the letter was deliberately anti-Pauline is a common view amongst scholars.²⁶² While it is by no means a consensus position,²⁶³ the evidence more reliably weighs on the side of the former. Faith-based theology was a characteristically Pauline idea, and arose out of his conviction of a Law-free gospel. There are also echoes between Jas. 2:18-14 and Rom. 3:27-4:22,²⁶⁴ and it has been pointed out that the Pauline language James employs was either non-existent prior to Paul, or almost entirely unattested.²⁶⁵ As such, this letter's use of this terminology indicates that he had Pauline thought in mind. It is also significant that James uses a key argument initially put forward by Paul; in Galatians, Paul had used the example of Abraham to justify his faith-based stance (Gal. 3:6-7), and James uses the same story to justify his works-based theology (Jas. 2:21-22). They even both refer to Genesis 15:6 in their arguments (Rom. 4:9-10; Jas. 2:23).²⁶⁶

As such, the Epistle of James is evidence of another critique of Pauline theology on the basis of his Law-free gospel. Along with this, it is also important to note the author's exceptionally positive attitude to the Law evident in the epistle (2:8-13; 4:11-12). While James' argument about faith and works does not reference the Law, the Torah still plays a significant role in the author's thinking. He speaks of the Law as 'the perfect Law', 'the Law of liberty' (1:25; 2:12), the 'royal Law' (2:8), the 'whole Law' (2:10), or just on its own as the Law (2:9, 11; 4:11).

It is thus likely that the author of James was directly arguing against the Pauline ideas of righteousness by faith apart from the Law. That Paul had enemies who disagreed with his views on the Law is evident by his own letters, but this epistle demonstrates that this anti-Pauline rhetoric on

²⁶² G. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (London: SCM, 1963), 58-164, 160-61; T. W. Leahy, 'The Epistle of James', in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer, and R. E. Murphy (London: Chapman, 1968), 367-77, 373; J. T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: SCM, 1975), 115-28; M. Hengel, 'Der Jakobusbrief Als Antipaulinische Polemik', in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of E. Earle Ellis for His 60th Birthday*, ed. G. F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 248-78; Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*, 140-49; Hagner, 'Jewish Christianity' 586; Wall, 'James', 1997; Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 1142; Allison, *James*, 441-52. Allison also lists Augustine as a proponent of this view.

²⁶³ Dibelius, *James*, 179-80; Johnson, *James*, 58-64; Hartin, *James*, 22, 30; McCartney, *James*, 53-54. J. B. Mayor, in the 19th century suggested the reverse; that Paul was written as a response to James. See Johnson, *James*, 110.

²⁶⁴ Dunn, *Beginning from Jerusalem*, 1142.

²⁶⁵ See a list of this terminology in Allison, *James*, 445-46.

²⁶⁶ Allison, *James*, 447.

issues relating to the topic of the Law continued possibly into the second century, and, importantly, continued under the name of James.

1.6.4 Ignatius of Antioch

Finally, Ignatius of Antioch, writing in the second century, testifies to a later form of this debate. Ignatius was bishop of Antioch in the first decade of the second century.²⁶⁷ Little is known of his life, aside from the circumstances surrounding his death; his journey to Rome and martyrdom is well-known, and it was on this journey, under Roman guard, that he wrote several letters to churches in the areas he was passing through. In his letters, Ignatius is unwavering about his commitment to Christ, and even has a kind of fanatical zeal for his upcoming violent death (see esp. *Rom.* 4).²⁶⁸ His letters provide invaluable evidence of turn-of-the-century theology, with passionate stances against Docetism and, notably here, Judaism. The vast majority of scholars place Ignatius' death at the beginning of the second century,²⁶⁹ most often around 107-110 CE. Ignatius is useful presently because his letters indicate some division and Judaizing efforts in several communities in Asia Minor.

In his letter to the church at Magnesia, Ignatius warns his Christian readers not to be led astray by Judaism. He writes that 'if we are still living in the practice of Judaism, it is an admission that we have failed to receive the gift of grace' (*Mag.* 8). Former 'adherents of ancient customs' used to observe Sabbath, but now observe the Lord's Day. He encourages the Magnesians to disregard the old leaven, and to change to the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ; for 'to profess Jesus Christ while continuing to follow Jewish customs is an absurdity' (*Mag.* 10). Ignatius is here explicit; he is condemning a Torah-observant gospel (and in very similar terms to Paul in *Gal.* 2:21).

Similar themes of warning against misguiding teachers are seen in his Letter to the Philadelphians (*Phild.* 2-3), though Ignatius does not name or describe the threat in this instance. It

²⁶⁷ Eusebius has him as the third bishop of Antioch, after St Peter's successor (*H.E.* 3:22).

²⁶⁸ W. R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 10.

²⁶⁹ See Schoedel, *Ignatius*, 1; T. G. Weinandy, 'The Apostolic Christology of Ignatius of Antioch: The Road to Chalcedon', in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 71-84, 71; C. E. Hill, 'Ignatius, "the Gospel", and the Gospels', in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 267-86, 268; D. C. Sim, 'Matthew and Ignatius of Antioch', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. B. Reppschinski and D. C. Sim (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 139-54, 142-43. On the other hand, G. Luedemann, in a minority, says a second century date is 'probably no longer acceptable'. A. Lindemann, 'Paul's Influence on "Clement" and Ignatius', in *Trajectories through the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. F. Gregory and C. M. Tuckett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 9-24, 17.

is possible that he is referring to his other enemies, the Docetists, whom he writes about in his letters (*Trall.* 6-11; *Smyrn.* 2-4),²⁷⁰ but he explicitly brings up Judaizers further along in the letter. He encourages the Philadelphians to not listen to anyone who propounds Judaism to them, even suggesting that these people are not circumcised (*Phild.* 6). Later, he tells of those who are only willing to believe in the Gospel if it is in the ‘ancient records’ (ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις), which refers to the Hebrew Scriptures.²⁷¹ Once again, Ignatius is condemning Christians Jews, who look for their beliefs in the Scriptures, and who are preaching in the Philadelphian community.

This very brief analysis of Ignatius’ letters demonstrates that he openly condemned a Law-abiding gospel. Interestingly, it has been noted that Ignatius’ response to these Judaizers was so integrated into his theological ideas and arguments, that it indicates that he had experience with these sorts of Judaizers elsewhere, more likely in his home base on Antioch.²⁷² Ignatius’ sentiment is the same that has been seen from Law-free Christians in the years before him; the Torah is not required in a Christian life. Even well after the time of the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, into the time of the second century and the era of the later church, this debate was important, and clashes over differences continued to occur.

1.7 Conclusions

This background chapter set out to survey the differing attitudes towards Gentile adherence to the Torah in the earliest church. It was seen that varied views on the issue existed from quite early on in the Christian narrative, with the Hellenists and the Hebrews differing over this point, and eventually forming separate communities, the Hebrews in Jerusalem, and the Hellenists in Antioch. Whilst in Antioch, the Hellenists began reaching out to Gentiles, and (after taking Paul under their guidance) later events indicate that this group had begun to take a specifically Law-free gospel to Gentiles. This move caught the attention of those remaining in Jerusalem and a Council was called to discuss this very issue. The official outcome of this Council cannot be known for certain, but it is unlikely that a real agreement or consolidation occurred, as there continued to be noticeable differences on the same topic at events after the Council. The Incident at Antioch involved men from James in Jerusalem (and later Peter) enforcing a Law-abiding gospel on the Gentiles in the city, and in protest, and also out of defeat, Paul left the city and embarked on his own independent Law-free Gentile missions. Law-abiding missionaries continued to plague Paul in his independent career, especially in Galatia, to whom Paul wrote a letter angrily and desperately defending his

²⁷⁰ M. D. Goulder has suggested that the enemies frequently described as Docetic were actually Ebionites. M. D. Goulder, ‘Ignatius’ “Docetists”,’ *VC* 53 (1999), 16-30

²⁷¹ Schoedel, *Ignatius*, 208.

²⁷² See P. J. Donahue, ‘Jewish Christianity in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch,’ *VC* 32 (1978), 81-93, 81-82;

own Law-free gospel in the face of teachers who had come in preaching a Law-abiding gospel to the Gentiles there. There are also possible traces of this same anti-Pauline effort in Paul's churches in Corinth, and Paul warns his church in Philippi of forthcoming Law-abiding efforts. After the deaths of Paul and James, it was seen that both Law-free and Law-abiding Gentile missions still existed, even decades after the main players had been killed. The author of Acts reflects a contemporary situation where Paul was still being criticised for breaching the Law, and Luke dedicates a considerable portion of his narrative to defending Paul of this accusation. The Pastoral Epistles likewise demonstrate that even Paul's successors were experiencing opposition to their Law-free gospel, and the letter of James provides first hand evidence of a Law-abiding Christian opposing Pauline ideas of faith whilst promoting the importance of following the Torah. Finally, Ignatius of Antioch, writing possibly into the second century, openly speaks out against Christians who would also try to live by Judaism, suggesting that the Gentile churches he was writing to were experiencing opposition from Law-abiding Christians. It has thus been demonstrated in this chapter that there were conflicting views on Gentile adherence to the Torah from the early years of the post-resurrection Christian movement into the second century.

Close analysis of the relevant texts demonstrates that these tensions were hardly teething problems for the church or Paul's ministry, but were still prominent for the second and third generations of the early church. The remainder of this study is then dedicated to demonstrating how Mark and Matthew both reflect this ongoing dispute.

Chapter 2: The Law and the Gentile Mission in Mark

The Gospel of Mark was composed shortly after the deaths of James and Paul. Mark was a pioneer in his genre, being the first to string together the traditions about Jesus of Nazareth and form them into a single narrative. Such an achievement was well noticed in the Christian community, notably by Matthew and Luke, who soon afterwards went on to imitate Mark and use him as the main source for their own Gospels. Several aspects of Mark indicate that he was originally addressing a predominantly Gentile audience. This is seen in the Gospel's explanations of Jewish customs (7:3, 11; 15:16) its relaxed attitude towards ritualistic aspects of the Torah (7:19), and its anti-Jewish sentiments (12:1-12). Obviously Mark was eventually spread into other communities but that the Markan community was written in a Gentile setting is widely accepted.²⁷³

There is an ancient tradition that testifies that the author this Gospel was the 'interpreter of Peter' (Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.39.15-16). Such a connection would obviously have significant implications for studying Mark's place in the early church, and so this Mark-Peter connection needs to quickly be addressed. Mark's Gospel itself does not claim to have an association with Peter, but the connection is first claimed in the writings of Papias in the second century.²⁷⁴ Some scholars maintain that a Peter-Mark connection is valid.²⁷⁵ These scholars tend to claim an early date for both Papias and the career of the elder who passed this tradition onto him.²⁷⁶ Such early traditions, they argue, have the utmost authority and thus reliability. The vast majority of modern

²⁷³ A selection of scholars who advocate a Gentile setting for Mark; V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text* (London: Macmillan, 1957), 31-37; R. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 248-49; W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1966), 98; Hengel, *Mark*, 29; R. A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* (Waco: Word Books, 1989), xxix-xxxi; W. A. Johnson, "'The Jews' in St Mark's Gospel," *RIL* 6 (1989), 182-92; J. Marcus, 'The Jewish War and the Sitz Im Leben of Mark,' *JBL* 111 (1992), 441-62; C. Focant, *The Gospel According to Mark: A Commentary*, trans. L. R. Keylock (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 7. Compare Crossley, who argues that Mark could have easily been Jewish. J. G. Crossley, 'Mark, Paul and the Question of Influences', in *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts and Convergences*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Willitts (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 10-29, 15.

²⁷⁴ The testimony of Papias is retained in fragmentary form in the work of Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea. He quotes Papias as writing; 'This, too, the presbyter used to say, "Mark, who had been Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully, but not in order, all that he remembered of the Lord's sayings and doings"' (*H.E.* 3.39.15-16). Similar claims are also echoed in Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 106.3, as well as Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1, the anonymous *Anti-Marcionite Prologue* to Mark, and in Clement of Alexandria *Hypotyposes* 6. It is possible that this apostolic connection was what saved Mark from obsolescence.

²⁷⁵ Most prominently Hengel, *Mark*, 47-53, and also in M. Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 2000), 65-68. See also R. H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 1026-45, and R. H. Gundry, *Old Is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 49-73. Other supporters of the Papias testimony on Mark are France, *Mark*, 38-41; R. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 12-38; R. H. Stein, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 1-9.

²⁷⁶ Hengel, *Mark*, 46, 149 n. 54; Gundry, *Mark*, 1027; Gundry, *Old Is Better*, 50-52; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*, 14.

scholars, however, disregard the Papias tradition as historically incredible.²⁷⁷ There are two central arguments for this view. Firstly, there is nothing particularly Petrine about Mark (indeed *Matthew* is more of a Petrine Gospel); while Peter is more individually prominent than any other disciple in the Markan Gospel, he is portrayed quite negatively, and his prominence only serves to highlight his faults (Mark 8:33; 9:5-6; 14:37, 66-72). Peter's prominence is also unsurprising given that he was an important figure in the early church. As such, Peter's prominence in Mark can be easily explained without personally connecting him with the evangelist.²⁷⁸ The second argument surrounds the unreliability of the carriers of this tradition. The tradition is essentially third hand; being passed on from the elder, to Papias, who is then quoted by Eusebius. Eusebius may even be quoting Papias from secondary sources, adding a further degree of separation from the elder who first passed on this tradition.²⁷⁹ And even if the testimony of this elder *had* been accurately passed down to Eusebius, there is no guarantee that this elder's words were historically reliable in the first place.²⁸⁰ That the testimony might come from an early source is not always an indicator of historical credibility. The reliability of Papias' evidence for a connection is weak, and even if it were stronger, the premise of Peter as the source of the Markan Gospel is untenable. Overall, despite Papias' claims about a Peter-Mark connection, the stronger arguments are against it.

This chapter will seek to establish Mark's position on the issue of Gentile adherence to the ritualistic aspects of the Torah, and it will become clear that Mark advocated a Law-free Gentile mission by having Jesus clearly conduct missions in Gentile areas (as distinct from Jewish areas) and by actively lowering and overriding the importance of ritual aspects of the Torah. Mark's general attitude towards the Gentile mission will be in focus first, and it will be seen that the Markan Jesus makes implicit efforts to take his ministry to the Gentiles. The Markan Jesus conducts two missions in the first half of the Gospel; there is a mission to the Jews, which takes place in Jewish territory, as well as a mission to the Gentiles, which takes place in Gentile territory.²⁸¹ This positive attitude towards a Gentile mission is confirmed in the narratives of the

²⁷⁷ K. Niederwimmer, 'Johannes Markus Und Die Frage Nach Dem Verfasser Des Zweiten Evangeliums,' *ZNW* 58 (1967), 172-88, 185-88; Boring, *Mark*, 10-11; J. R. Donahue and D. J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002), 38-41; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 21-25; D. C. Sim, 'The Gospel of Matthew, John the Elder and the Papias Tradition: A Response to R. H. Gundry,' *HTS* 63 (2009), 283-99; I. J. Elmer, 'Robbing Paul to Pay Peter: The Papias Notice on Mark', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 671-98.

²⁷⁸ One might also expect a more personal account from Peter's mouth that the Markan account of Jesus' ministry, such as why Peter and his brother followed Jesus. Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 23. Marcus also points out that Mark's geography has some inaccuracies (6:45, 53; 7:31) that are hard to explain if Peter, an eye-witness and a local to Galilee, was a source. J. Marcus, 'Mark, Gospel Of', in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. D. N. Freedman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 859-61, 859.

²⁷⁹ Elmer, 'Papias Notice on Mark', 676.

²⁸⁰ Sim, 'Response to Gundry', 297.

²⁸¹ That Mark was advocating two separate missions is widely accepted. See E. K. Wefald, 'The Separate Gentile Mission in Mark: A Narrative Explanation of Markan Geography, the Two Feeding Accounts and

Syrophenician woman, and the feeding of the four thousand, where Jesus symbolically opens up his mission to the Gentiles and counts them as equal to Jews (7:24-8:10). Discussion will then turn to Mark's attitude towards the Law. In a series of narratives and actions throughout the Gospel, the Markan Jesus lessens and even dismisses the ritualistic aspects of the Torah. This is most pointedly seen in the Sabbath controversies (2:23-3:6) and in the Markan comment that Jesus has purified all foods (7:19b). Notably, this relaxed attitude is especially seen in the context of the Gentile mission (6:53-8:10). In these two ways, Mark shows considerable alignment to the Law-free gospel earlier advocated by Paul and the Hellenists, and in putting the directives for such a Law-free gospel into the words of Jesus himself, Mark can be seen to be laying the historical ground work for a Law-free Gentile mission.

2.1 The Law-free Gentile Mission in Mark

The Markan Jesus' intent for a Gentile mission is firstly indicated through a series of geographic movements. Jesus never explicitly preaches to Gentiles, as opposed to Jews, but geographic indicators in the narrative show two separate settings for Jesus' preaching. In Mark, the geographic marker is the Sea of Galilee. Multiple times in the Gospel, Jesus and his disciples cross from one side of the lake to the other, and it is apparent that on one side, Jesus' audience are Jews, and on the other, they are Gentiles. This analysis was primarily put forward by E. K. Wefald in 1995,²⁸² and the following summary owes much to his original article.

Jesus' mission in Mark starts in his home land of Galilee, on the west side of the Sea of Galilee. His first act is to teach in a synagogue and to exorcise a man with an unclean spirit (1:21-27). He then chooses his disciples and they all preach in the neighbouring towns 'for that is what I [Jesus] came out to do' (1:38). Jesus heals various people (1:40-45; 2:1-12; 3:5), calls followers (1:16-20; 2:13-17; 3:13-19), and teaches (4:1-34), all the while engaging in a series of disputes with the local scribes and Pharisees (2:6-12, 16-17, 18-22, 24-28; 3:1-6, 22-30). The multiple references to synagogues, Jewish leaders, and Jewish towns (1:21, 39; 2:1) indicate that in this first

Exorcisms,' *JSNT* 60 (1995), 3-26, 118-19; Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 118-19; W. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law: A Study of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 126; Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth'; I. J. Elmer, 'Fishing the Other Side: The Gentile Mission in Mark's Gospel', in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. D. C. Sim and J. S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 154-72.

²⁸² Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission'. His theory is also supported by E. S. Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); J. Svartvik, *Mark and Mission: Mk 7:1-23 in Its Narrative and Historical Contexts* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000), 236-39; K. R. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark: 'Even the Dogs under the Table Eat the Children's Crumbs'* (London: T&T Clark, 2007); Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth', 156-59; J. Svartvik, "'East Is East and West Is West: the Concept of Torah in Paul and Mark', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 157-88, 179.

part of his ministry Jesus was in Jewish territory preaching to Jews. After some teaching to large crowds, Jesus suggests to his disciples that they all ‘go across to the other side’ (4:35), to the ‘country of the Gerasenes’ (5:1), a Gentile area. Upon their arrival, Jesus has a confrontation with a series of demons possessing a man there, and he casts them into a herd of swine (5:11-13). The cured man proclaims Jesus’ works in the Decapolis, before Jesus departs again by boat to ‘the other side’ (5:21). There are indicators in this short trip that Jesus had crossed over to Gentile territory, namely the herd of swine (which Jews would not have eaten or worked with), and the Gentile area of the Decapolis. There are no synagogues mentioned, and scribes and Pharisees are suddenly and notably absent.

When Jesus arrives back on the other side of the lake, he is immediately approached by a leader of the synagogue (5:22), signalling that Jesus is back on Jewish territory.²⁸³ Jesus heals Jairus’ daughter, again starts teaching in the synagogue (6:2), is rejected by his home town (6:1-6), and cures some more sick people (6:5). While in this area, he teaches a large crowd of five thousand men, and, concerned for their welfare, transforms five loaves of bread and two fish into enough food to feed them all (6:34-44). Straight after this, Jesus advises his disciples to ‘get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side to Bethsaida’ (6:45), a Gentile town, and he will follow them. In their attempt to cross the Sea, the disciples become too afraid of Jesus as he walks on water, and turns back to Jewish territory (Gennesaret; 6:53). Here, Jesus heals many people, and from this point Mark begins a series of stories that are particularly important to the Gentile mission. First, Jesus has another dispute with the Pharisees over their hand washing traditions, which Mark turns into a general statement of the cleanliness of all foods (7:1-23). Next, Jesus moves to the Gentile region of Tyre (7:24), and has an encounter with a Syrophoenician woman, during which he agrees that her daughter should be healed (7:26-30). He then enters the Gentile region of the Decapolis (7:31), and here, he heals a deaf man using his own spittle (7:32-37). Finally, while teaching a large crowd, Jesus performs a second mass feeding miracle, this time to a mass of four thousand people (8:1-9). After this, Jesus and his disciples get on a boat and go to Dalmanutha, a town in Jewish territory (8:10). Immediately, the Pharisees argues with Jesus about a sign (8:11-12), and very quickly, Jesus and his disciples get into the boat to cross to ‘the other side’ (8:13), this time successfully arriving at the Gentile town of Bethsaida (8:22). Jesus heals a blind man (8:22-26), and goes on to the villages of Caesarea Philippi (8:27), a pagan site of worship, where Peter declares Jesus as the Messiah (8:27-30), Jesus makes the first prediction of his own death (8:31-9:1) and where, six days later, Jesus’ transfiguration occurs (9:2-8). After an exorcism (9:17-29), Jesus and his disciples re-enters Galilee (9:30), and the Markan narrative

²⁸³ It is here that Mark points out that Jesus is wearing a fringe cloak (5:27; cf. 6:56).

becomes focused on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem.²⁸⁴ For the first half of the Markan Gospel, then, the Markan Jesus divides his ministry into two; one setting is Jewish, and the other is Gentile.

Wefald goes further, identifying further parallels between the ministries in Jewish and Gentile territories. In Mark, Jesus performs six exorcisms (1:21-28, 32-34, 39; 3:11-12; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29). The first three occur on Jewish territory, and the last three on Gentile territory. The first and fourth exorcisms are Jesus' first acts of ministry in the Jewish and Gentile lands respectively. As a result of this first act in each territory, Jesus' fame spreads throughout the region (Galilee in 1:28, the Decapolis in 5:20). Wefald also draws a parallel between John the Baptist and the Gerasene demoniac, both of whom lived in the wilderness (1:4; 5:5), and both prepared the way for Jesus' ministry; John the Baptist for the Jewish lands, the Gerasene demoniac in the Decapolis. The calling of the disciples by the sea (1:16-20) is also paralleled by the Gerasene demoniac trying to join Jesus' group by the sea (5:18).²⁸⁵ The two stories of the mass feedings are also meant to convey the two separate mission fields, and this will be detailed below.²⁸⁶

As the narrative progresses, the Gentile responses and reactions to Jesus are considerably more positive (5:18-20; 7:24, 31-37) than the Jewish responses (3:5-6, 20-21; 6:1-6). After Jesus' first trip to Gentile territory and the positive reception from the victim of the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20), Jesus returns to the Jewish side of the lake (5:21), where he heals the daughter of Jairus (5:22-43), and then proceeds to his hometown (6:1). This second encounter with Jesus' family details Jesus' inability to do miracles in his home town due to their unbelief (6:2-6). I. J. Elmer points out that this negative reaction to Jesus' ministry is in stark contrast to the reaction of the Gerasene demoniac and the success stories that later come in Gentile territory (the Syrophenician woman in 7:24-30, and the Gentile deaf man in the Decapolis (7:31-37). In laying out his narrative this way, Mark is juxtaposing the success of the Gentile ministry with the less successful Jewish campaign.²⁸⁷

Further to this point, K. R. Iverson notes that as Mark's Gospel goes on, Jesus goes deeper into Gentile territory and spends longer ministering there; at the same time spending less and less time on his Jewish ministry as his intervals between Gentile ministries get shorter and shorter.²⁸⁸ Jesus' first Gentile journey was brief (4:35-5:20) only healing the Gerasene demoniac. His attempted second journey was forced to turn back (6:45-52), but his third journey (7:24-8:9) was

²⁸⁴ Iverson suggests that the tearing of the curtain in 15:38 is significant for the Markan Gentile mission.

Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 151-53.

²⁸⁵ Iverson points out some other parallels. Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 122.

²⁸⁶ See Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 16-25; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 155.

²⁸⁷ Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 166-68.

²⁸⁸ Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 123. So too Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 166-68.

more lengthy than the first; he encounters the Syrophenician woman, heals a deaf man, and feeds the four thousand. The fourth Gentile journey was even longer again (8:13-9:29), and contains some important moments of Mark's Gospel; Peter's declaration about Jesus at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus' prediction of his own death and resurrection, the first call to followers (besides the Twelve),²⁸⁹ and the transfiguration. Simultaneously, Jesus' Jewish ministries were becoming shorter, and more volatile. Jesus' initial ministry in Galilee is quite prolonged and establishes Jesus' teaching (1:14-4:34). After his return from the land of the Gerasenes, there is again a relatively lengthy stretch in Jewish territory (5:21-6:44). After his failed attempt to go to Bethsaida, many sick are brought to Jesus (6:54-56), and he only has one argument with the Pharisees (6:53-7:23) before going to Tyre (7:24). After his return, Jesus' stay is extremely fleeting, only very briefly arguing with the Pharisees (8:10-12) before going back to Bethsaida (8:22). This subtle structural progression in Mark could reflect a re-prioritisation on Jesus' part; these are no longer two equal missionary fields, but a gradual handover to an increasingly, and potentially exclusively, Gentile mission.²⁹⁰

As well as this narrative technique, Mark's Gospel also contains narratives that introduce and justify the idea of preaching to the Gentiles. This is seen in a series of stories that all relate to the theme of a Gentile mission and are set within a framework of Jesus travelling to Gentile lands; Mark 6:53-8:9.²⁹¹ This cluster of stories occurs just after the disciples' initial attempt to go to the Gentile town of Bethsaida, an attempt which has failed because of the disciples' fear of Jesus as he walked on water, resulting in a return to Jewish territory to Gennesaret (6:45-52). Wefald points out that the distress of the disciples on the Sea of Galilee could symbolise that the disciples were scared of going to Gentile territory.²⁹² The stories in this part of Mark's narrative are almost entirely teachings on the Gentile mission, and different parts of Jewish identity are challenged in turn. First, the Markan Jesus dismisses all food laws, then he defeats the idea of Israelite priority, and finally he extends to Gentiles Eucharistic acceptance into his fellowship.

The first story is Jesus' dispute with the Pharisees over hand washing (7:1-13), which turns into a teaching over what defiles (7:14-16), and later private discussion with the disciples, with the all-important Markan comment that in his teaching, Jesus purified all foods (7:17-23). This is a key moment in the Markan Jesus' attitude towards the Torah, where Mark indicates that Jesus'

²⁸⁹ Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 184.

²⁹⁰ Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 185-86.

²⁹¹ This cluster of stories is frequently noted. See, for example, Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 114; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 166. See Iverson for how these passages have been grouped by different scholars. Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 40.

²⁹² Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 20. Iverson also makes this point; Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 40.

teaching abolishes a significant body of Jewish ritual Law. This statement with big implications for food laws will be detailed below.

Mark next tells of Jesus' encounter with a Syrophoenician woman (7:24-30), a story with his most direct message about Jesus opening up his ministry to Gentiles. Jesus is now in Gentile territory, specifically Tyre (7:24), a Gentile city. To further emphasise the Gentile identity of the woman at hand, Mark is explicit that 'the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin'. Initially, Jesus rejects her pleas to cast a demon out from her daughter, claiming that the children (i.e. Jews) should be fed first, and that this food should not be thrown 'to the dogs' (i.e. Gentiles).²⁹³ But her answer, that even the dogs eat the children's crumbs shows her great faith and as a result Jesus extends his healing ministry to her, setting her daughter free of the demon. Putting aside the unexpected harshness of Jesus' response,²⁹⁴ the lesson of this story is that even though the food was initially meant for the Jews, the Gentiles can also partake in the kingdom.²⁹⁵ The previous mass feeding of the five thousand (6:30-44) also has interpretive implications for this story. If Jesus had said the woman could have the leftovers from the Jews, the sheer volume of leftovers after the feeding of the five thousand demonstrates the inclusion of Gentiles in the gospel.²⁹⁶ After this story, the Markan Jesus preaches throughout the Gentile region in Sidon and the Decapolis, where, using his own spittle, he heals a man who is deaf and mute (7:31-37).

The final story in this Gentile teaching block of Mark's Gospel is Jesus' feeding of the four-thousand-strong crowd (8:1-9). The previous feeding to the crowd of five thousand had taken place in Jewish territory (6:1), and the second takes place in Gentile territory (7:31). The two feedings are similar stories; Jesus finds himself followed by a large crowd, he has concern for their welfare, and so he multiplies some loaves and fish to feed everyone, with an abundance left over. Significantly, both of the feeding stories have Eucharistic overtones, the second explicitly so with

²⁹³ While it has been clear that up to now in the narrative the Markan Jesus has actively evangelised in Gentile territories, it is interesting to note that within this pericope the Syrophoenician woman has an active role in persuading Jesus to see the Gentiles as worthy of his ministry. Jesus' initial response was outright rejection, and it is only after a wise response from this unnamed woman that Jesus comes around and opens up his ministry to her, and by implication, all Gentiles.

²⁹⁴ And the fact that Jesus has already been preaching in Gentile territory earlier in the Gospel. Loader suggests that this story comes from a conservative Markan source. See W. Loader, 'Challenged at the Boundaries: A Conservative Jesus in Mark's Tradition,' *JSNT* 63 (1996), 45-61.

²⁹⁵ That the story of the Syrophoenician woman in some way symbolises or foreshadows the Gentile mission is a commonly held position. See Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 114-16; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 487; (also Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 465-66; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 80; Collins, *Mark*, 364; Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, esp. 44-57; Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 39-42.

²⁹⁶ M. P. Theophilus, 'The Roman Connection: Paul and Mark', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 45-71, 55-58; also Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 470; A. B. Salzmann, "'Do You Still Not Understand?': Mark 8:21 and the Mission to the Gentiles,' *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 39 (2009), 129-34, 131-32. See also Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 50-51.

Mark's use of the word εὐχαριστεῖω in 8:6.²⁹⁷ This second feeding has almost explicit connotations for the Gentile mission, symbolising that the ministry of Jesus is just as open to Gentiles as it had been to Jews.²⁹⁸

There are several key indicators that this second feeding story is directed at Gentiles. Even though no explicit location is named, it is assumed that the location from the previous passage still applies, therefore the second mass feeding takes place in the Decapolis (7:31).²⁹⁹ Mark also writes that the crowd had come from far away (μακρόθεν), which was a common term for Gentiles, who were metaphorically further away from God than Jews.³⁰⁰ A. B. Salzmänn has also pointed out that the use of the word for 'baskets' in both accounts is telling;³⁰¹ in the first feeding Mark uses the word κόφινος, a term associated with Jews and Jewish practice, but in the second feeding Mark uses the word σπυρίς, a basket commonly used through the eastern Mediterranean at the time. The number of baskets remaining after the feeding is also indicative of their audience. With the first feeding, there were twelve baskets leftover, which potentially symbolises the twelve tribes of Israel, but after the second feeding, there were seven baskets left over, the number that often represents totality in the Scriptures, or a reference to the seventy Gentile nations.³⁰² So even in these intricate ways, Mark has implied that there was a previous mass feeding to the Jews, and now a mass feeding to the Gentiles. For Mark, this story culminates Jesus' openness to Gentiles, and from here, the Markan Jesus, his cluster of Gentile mission teachings over, eventually proceeds to successfully take his disciples to Bethsaida by boat (8:22).

Analysis of the Markan narrative thus indicates that the Markan Jesus makes efforts to preach his gospel to the Gentiles as distinct from Jews. And it is important to note that the Markan Jesus' efforts to preach to Gentiles are not an effort to convert them to Judaism. The Markan Jesus does not teach Gentiles about what is lawful, or about how they should change to comply with Jewish ritualistic expectations. Instead, the Markan Jesus preaches his gospel to Gentiles *as they are* – as Gentiles, not as future Jews. For the Markan Jesus, adherence to the ritualistic aspects of the Torah was not required in order to follow the gospel. Rather than encouraging adherence to the Jewish Law in order for Gentiles to be accepted, *the Markan Jesus lessens the importance of the Torah to enable Gentile acceptance in the Kingdom*. This is the second way Mark establishes a

²⁹⁷ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 410, 488.

²⁹⁸ See especially Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 16-25; also Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 118-19; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 497; Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 67-77; Salzmänn, 'Mission to the Gentiles'; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 165. For an argument that the second feeding is *not* a metaphor for the Gentile mission, see Collins, *Mark*, 377-81.

²⁹⁹ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 492.

³⁰⁰ See Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 487.

³⁰¹ Salzmänn, 'Mission to the Gentiles', 132-33.

³⁰² See Salzmänn, 'Mission to the Gentiles', 130-31; also Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 23-24.

Law-free mission in his Gospel; by having Jesus consistently re-evaluating and even dismissing the ritual aspects of the Torah. These laws were foundational to the barriers that existed between the Jews and Gentiles, and the Markan Jesus effectively disregards this barrier.

2.2 *The Law in Mark*

Much has been made of the Law in Mark. It is well accepted that the evangelist has a liberal view of some aspects of the Law, and the Markan Jesus breaks with ritual aspects of the Torah numerous times throughout the Gospel. The Jewish Law as a whole is not a significant part of Mark's theological framework, and the word νόμος is completely absent.³⁰³ Instead, Mark is more focused on areas such as Christology and the Gentile ministry, and arguably, the Torah only comes into Mark's thought as a reaction to these larger ideas.³⁰⁴ When the Markan Jesus *does* talk about the practicalities of the Law, it is always in reaction to the Pharisees or scribes, and in these arguments, Jesus' attitude towards the Law is always relaxed, and in contravention with typical Jewish practice.

In this discussion it is important to keep perspective. While the Markan Jesus tones down the ritualistic aspects of the Law, he strongly promotes adherence to the moral commandments in the Torah, and he still uses Jewish Scripture to justify his actions. Nothing in Mark suggests a complete abandonment of the Jewish Law or tradition.³⁰⁵ The Markan Jesus did not abandon Judaism, or the Scriptures and the morals that went along with it, but he did consistently question the contemporary applications of the Law. The following discussion will first look at the Sabbath controversies in Mark, then smaller examples of a dismissive attitude towards the Law, and then lastly, the Markan comment that Jesus purified all foods.

The two Sabbath controversies in Mark provide a good introduction to the discussion of Mark and the Law.³⁰⁶ In the first controversy (2:23-28), Jesus' disciples are plucking grain on the Sabbath, and this is picked up by the Pharisees, who accuse them of doing what is not permitted

³⁰³ Compared to it appearing eight times in Matthew. Even Mark's more frequent use of ἐξεστιν (2:24, 26; 3:4; 6:18; 10:2; 12:14, often translated as 'lawful') is not calling on the Torah specifically, but rather translates permitted or authorised. Even so, except for the John the Baptist narrative (6:18), ἐξεστιν is only ever used in Jesus' arguments with the Pharisees, whose primary agenda is to question Jesus on his lawfulness.

³⁰⁴ H. Sariola suggests that for Mark, Jesus is the ultimate authority, which relativises the standing of the Torah. See H. Sariola, *Markus Und Das Gesetz: Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1990), 249-50. Loader similarly suggests that Mark's overall framework is his Christology; Jesus is God's son, who has divine authority and power. For Mark, this foundational idea is the starting point of his entire theology, and the Law can only be seen through this prism. As such, Jesus' authority has overtaken that of the Torah for the Markan community. See Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 122-25.

³⁰⁵ Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 129.

³⁰⁶ Jesus' first act in Mark is to heal on the Sabbath (1:21), though this action is not met with opposition.

(ἐξέσται). Jesus defends the actions of his disciples, citing the example of David eating the bread of presence, and the pericope concludes with the statements that ‘the Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath’. This pericope has several significant indications of Mark’s attitudes towards ritualistic aspects of the Law. Firstly, even though Jesus does not disregard the Sabbath explicitly, the entire encounter with the Pharisees is clearly a story that exerts Jesus’ authority to interpret and override traditional Jewish practice about the Law.³⁰⁷ This is evident in Jesus’ defence of his disciples’ actions and especially in the statement where he says that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus justifies his and his disciples’ work on the Sabbath, and he makes no effort to stop the disciples from picking grain, instead justifying their actions and he uses his authority to override the Law.³⁰⁸ This Sabbath narrative also has larger implications; it is not just an account of a dispute with the Pharisees – Jesus’ final words in this pericope have a general application (especially 2:27), and so indicate that the story was also meant to have larger implications for the Markan community.³⁰⁹ The Markan Jesus’ argument is also based on God’s intentions for the Sabbath (2:27),³¹⁰ and so Mark is here giving ultimate authority to a relaxed position on the Law.³¹¹

Shortly after this first confrontation the Pharisees continue to monitor Jesus to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath (3:1-6). Fully aware of their intentions, Jesus heals a man with a withered hand. Once again, the Markan Jesus claims the authority to determine when to follow the Sabbath law. Both of these controversies serve to establish the continuing conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees in Mark’s Gospel, but they also are a basic introduction to Jesus’ radical take on ritual aspects of the Torah.³¹² These stories demonstrate that from the beginning of his ministry, the Markan Jesus was willing to relax the Law. The Markan Jesus was radical in his interpretation of

³⁰⁷ M. A. Tolbert, ‘Is It Lawful on the Sabbath: To Do Good or to Do Harm: Mark’s Ethics of Religious Practice,’ *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 23 (1996), 199-214, 209.

³⁰⁸ Whether these stories imply that the Markan Jesus observed the Sabbath at all is debatable. See Painter, ‘Mark and the Pauline Mission’, 529. D. C. Sim writes that the Markan Jesus arguably did override the Sabbath. See Sim, ‘Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth’, 160. Despite these earlier statements about the Sabbath, the Sabbath is arguably still observed in the passion narrative by Joseph of Arimathea (15:42), the women (16:1), and even Jesus himself (who rose from the dead on Sunday, not Saturday). J. G. Crossley argues that Mark does not speak about *whether* the Sabbath should be observed; instead he questions the *interpretation* of Sabbath observance. See Crossley, ‘Mark, Paul’, 21. Loader agrees, writing that here Mark demonstrates that Jesus is, once again, the ultimate authority on all things, including the Law, but that the Sabbath is not completely dismissed.

³⁰⁹ Repschinski argues that the Markan community would have understood it as such. B. Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 104, n.45. M. D. Hooker makes a similar point; Hooker, *Mark*, 102.

³¹⁰ This is also seen in Jesus’ reference to the Scripture, ‘Have you not read?’ (2:25). Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 33-34.

³¹¹ Interestingly, M. D. Hooker has pointed out that Mark’s Gentile audience would have seen these stories as teachings that excuse observance from the Torah. Hooker, *Mark*, 102.

³¹² Loader suggests that Jesus’ healing of Simon’s mother-in-law took place on the Sabbath (1:30-32). Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 18.

the Torah, and bold in his refusal to observe it in line with custom, especially in the face of Jewish authority.

Mark elsewhere demonstrates his radical teachings on the Law. One of the clearest examples is in Jesus' conversation with a scribe (12:28-34), where the scribe exclaims that love of God and neighbour 'is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices' (12:33-34). Jesus 'saw that he answered wisely, [and] he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God"', thus approving of a sentiment that lowered the importance of ritual aspects of the Law. Another strong example of tension with contemporary Jewish practice of the Law is in Jesus' teachings about divorce. In Mark 10:12-13, Jesus is posed a trick question from the Pharisees about divorce, where Jesus dismisses the Mosaic Law permitting divorce, saying it was only written to accommodate people's 'hardness of heart'. Instead, he refers to Genesis, and bases his teaching on the creation story. This demonstrates his loyalty to the Scriptures yet, in this case, a fundamental reinterpretation of the Law.³¹³ Another possible example is the dual sayings about unshrunk cloth and new and old wineskins (2:21-22),³¹⁴ where Jesus talks about replacing the old with the new right after discussion of fasting and right before dismissal of the Sabbath.

These examples are important, and contribute to the overall pattern of Jesus overriding the ritual aspects of the Torah that is present in Mark, but the most important passage in discussion of Mark's view of the Law is undoubtedly 7:1-23. Here, after entering into an argument with the Pharisees about their tradition of hand washing, the Markan Jesus calls the crowd to him and says 'there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile' (7:15). Jesus later elaborates on this to a more intimate audience of his disciples, and Mark concludes Jesus' lesson with the explanation, that he had purified all foods; καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα.³¹⁵ Here, Mark makes his most explicit statements about the validity of the ritual aspects of the Torah;³¹⁶ when the Markan Jesus insists that defilement cannot come from what one

³¹³ Jesus' teaching on divorce (10:1-9) could be seen as a disregard for the Torah, but it could easily be argued that instead of a relaxed approach it is actually a stricter teaching than the Torah describes, and also possibly does not fall into the 'ritual' aspect of the Law. On the point of Jesus' command being stricter than the Torah, see Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 256.

³¹⁴ Hooker, *Mark*, 100; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 239;

³¹⁵ The NRSV translation 'thus he declared all foods clean' can be described as an exaggerated interpretation of the Greek. There is no indication of a 'declaration' in the original text; there is simply a comment from the evangelist that in saying these words Jesus purified all food. Nevertheless, the implications of this Markan comment are still immensely significant.

³¹⁶ That 7:1-23 is an indication that Mark was promoting a break from the Torah is widely agreed upon. E.g. Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah*, 132-33; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 71-79, 125-28; Collins, *Mark*, 356; Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 80; Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth', 160; D. Boyarin points out that this is a commonly held view; D. Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels: The Story of the Jewish Christ* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 108. But not all agree. See Rudolph, 'Food Laws'; Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel*, 191-92; again Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 13-15; Y. Furstenberg,

consumes, he is here referring to food laws, as confirmed by Mark's later editorial comment in 7:19b. Instead of coming from impure food, defilement comes from the human heart. According to Mark, then, dietary Laws as prescribed by the Torah are no longer valid.³¹⁷ It is hard to overestimate the significance of this passage. Mark 7:15-19 is a direct contradiction of Lev. 11:46-47, and the whole plethora of food laws built into Jewish custom and tradition.³¹⁸ In an instant, the Markan Jesus has renounced a whole sweep of Jewish laws.³¹⁹

The narrative context of this passage is also fundamental to the message of the Law-free gospel in Mark. Mark's comment about the purifying of foods occurs in the middle of Mark's cluster of stories that relate to the Gentile mission (6:53-8:9). It is significant that it is when Mark is on-topic about welcoming in the Gentile mission that the Markan Jesus has his strongest teaching (7:15) and the Markan author makes *his* strongest statement (7:19b) against observing key ritualistic aspects of the Torah. Food laws had significant implications for the unity of Jews and Gentiles, who otherwise were separated by a myriad of purity factors. In playing down such ritual laws as food laws, the Markan Jesus is symbolically lowering the barriers between Jew and Gentile in an effort to fully welcome Gentiles into his ministry

For example, smaller intricacies within the text shed further light on the significance of this teaching. There are subtle changes within the setting of the passage; from 7:1-13, Jesus is engaged in a dispute with the Pharisees, but at 7:14, he 'calls the people to him', and from here he starts to teach to the crowd generally and emphatically; 'Hear me, all of you, and understand...' In this change of environment, Mark emphasises that Jesus' teaching is not something merely directed at the Pharisees in the context of the argument, it is a universal teaching.³²⁰ Further, both of Jesus' responses in this story (7:18-19, 20-23) end with the encompassing term *πάντα* ('all'), which emphasises the universality of Jesus' claims.³²¹

'Defilement Penetrating the Body: A New Understanding of the Contamination in Mark 7.15,' *NTS* 54 (2008), 176-200; Bird, 'Mark', 49.

³¹⁷ See Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 74; Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 80; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 165; Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 550.

Marcus points out that Jesus was not saying that foods were *always* clean – he had previously shown acceptance of Moses' authority – rather, Jesus was declaring that all foods were *now* clean. Marcus also points out that in other biblical times changes to food purity had taken place (Gen. 9:3). Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 457.

³¹⁸ Appendix in J. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 29-49, 47.

³¹⁹ Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth', 160.

³²⁰ M. Rescio and L. Walt, "'There Is Nothing Unclean': Jesus and Paul against the Policies of Purity?," *ASE* 29 (2012), 53-82, 65.

³²¹ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 456.

The passage gains even more significance when the hand of the Markan author as a redactor and editor is taken into account. It can be deduced that Mark has added some dialogue to an existing story. 7:1-13 was likely originally a story purely about Jesus' argument with the Pharisees about hand washing.³²² There are several clues that this was the case. One is the change in audience, as outlined above, from just the Pharisees (7:1-13), to an entire crowd (7:14-16), and later to just the disciples (7:17-23). Another important indication is the change of topic that takes place in the story. At the beginning of the pericope (7:1-13), the story about Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees is about hand washing – a part of the tradition of the elders that was not part of the Torah. After condemning the Pharisees for forsaking the word of God for the sake of their tradition (7:6-13), the Markan Jesus summons the crowd and speaks to them about defilement and Jewish food laws (7:19b). This is a clear change of topic.³²³ What started out as a debate about hand washing ends up as a clear dismissal of the Torah.³²⁴ The evangelist has thus transformed an original conflict story with the Pharisees into the centrepiece of his theology of the Law.³²⁵

Not all agree that 7:19b is indicative of a critical attitude towards the Law. Some have pointed out Jesus' own contradiction in the pericope; at the beginning of the story, Jesus condemns the Pharisees for their abandonment of God's word (7:8-10), only to go on and dismiss the entire body of God-given food laws.³²⁶ As such, these scholars argue that disregarding the Law can hardly be Mark's intent in the second half of this passage. But this disparity can be easily explained by considering that this is Mark's editing of an original story that did not originally conclude with a discarding of a significant portion of Jewish Law. The original story may very well have been only about hand washing, and had Jesus referring to the importance of the word of God in this context. But Mark has turned this story into a broader lesson about purity laws generally, and so Jesus' words in 7:8-10 should not be used as a measure of meaning for Jesus' follow-up statements from 7:14 onwards.

³²² See D. E. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1969), 191-93; Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 266; Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah*, 128-29; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 447-48; France, *Mark*, 276-77; Meier, *Marginal Jew 4*, 353; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul, 2014', 46-47.

³²³ D. E. Nineham points out that the Pharisaic tradition of hand washing was not in any way related to food purity; impure hands were not thought to transfer impurity to food. See Nineham, *Saint Mark*, 191.

³²⁴ One must be careful to not interpret Mark 7:1-23 through the lens of Matt. 15:1-20. It will be discussed in the next chapter that here Matthew drastically changes the direction of the passage. He eliminates the key passage of 7:19b, and at the end of his account, explicitly brings the topic back to hand washing (15:20). Matthew's ending fits the context and the intention of the original story, whereas Mark deliberately broadens the implications of Jesus' teaching. Essentially, Matthew attempts to neutralise this damaging passage. Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 530-32. This will be detailed in the next chapter on Matthew.

³²⁵ J. D. G. Dunn even suggests that Mark 7:15 was originally a less controversial saying that Mark has made more explicit with his editorial comment. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 38.

³²⁶ See for example, Rudolph, 'Food Laws', 295-99; and Bird, 'Mark', 49.

Further, various scholars have offered their own interpretations of Jesus' words in 7:19b in ways that do not require that Jesus dismissed the food laws of the Torah. For example, J. G. Crossley argues that Jesus' words are best understood to mean 'all foods permitted *in the Law* are clean'.³²⁷ D. Boyarin's interpretation of 7:19b that Jesus 'purified all foods' from the stringent Pharisaic rules that he was originally arguing about.³²⁸ But there are no such distinctions made in the text, and such interpretations seem strained.³²⁹ There is a tendency to see this story through the lens of the introduction about hand washing, or even through the lens of Matthew, who does explicitly direct attention back to hand washing (Matt. 15:1-20).³³⁰ Mark's editorial hand is often not given sufficient consideration. This appears to be a Markan manipulation of a source's story, and interestingly, a few scholars have suggested that *Matthew* more accurately retains the spirit of the original source story.³³¹

So then, as well as Mark's Gentile setting, these examples demonstrate that the Markan Jesus started to lay the groundwork for a Law-free gospel. But not all agree that the Markan Jesus advocated for a Law-free gospel. A frequent argument against a relaxed Torah in Mark is that the Markan Jesus is such a Jewish character.³³² There is no denying this. Even though the Markan Jesus purified all foods and questioned the interpretation of divorce and the Sabbath, the Markan Jesus is a Jew by birth and by practice. He lives in Nazareth (1:9), attends the synagogue (1:21, 39; 6:2), teaches the moral commandments of the Torah (7:10; 10:19; 12:28-34), praises the Ten Commandments (10:19), and travels to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, as per tradition. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus prays and gives thanks for food, as was Jewish custom (6:41; 8:6; 14:22), he calls twelve disciples, reflecting the twelve tribes of Israel,³³³ he encourages a newly

³²⁷ See Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 14. Crossley's analysis is flawed in many ways. For example, he points out that the linguistic parallels of Mark 7:19 and Rom. 14:14 are not clear indicators of influence (a fair point), but Crossley argues against this linguistic connection by pointing out that there are also traditions of clean and unclean foods associated with Peter (Acts 10-11:18), and thus these also were a source for the saying. Crossley does not take into account that Peter's association with the Gentile mission in Acts was a Lukan effort to harmonise the early church, instead taking the historicity of Acts for granted. He later argues that Mark and Paul may have developed the saying independently, or possibly even from the historical Jesus himself. See Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 13-14.

³²⁸ Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 121. J. Marcus wrote an appendix to his landmark article, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', in 2014 in direct response to Boyarin's claims. In relation to this claim, Marcus writes that Mark's text indicates nothing of this narrow definition of 7:15, 19b. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul, 2014', 48. Boyarin distinguishes between purity laws and food laws – he writes that kosher food was not a matter of purity – it was a category unto itself. Thus, when Jesus is talking about defilement in 7:1-23, he is still talking about hand washing, which *was* an issue of purity. Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 121.

³²⁹ Some scholars have even suggested that this passage applies only to Gentiles; Rudolph, 'Food Laws', 304; Bird, 'Mark', 49.

³³⁰ J. Marcus accuses Boyarin of just this (Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul, 2014', 46-48). Boyarin insists that the story is only ever about hand washing. Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 121.

³³¹ Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 51; Rudolph, 'Food Laws', 308; Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 14; Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 530.

³³² Rudolph, 'Food Laws'; Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel*, 82-98; Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 102-128; Rescio and Walt, 'There Is Nothing Unclean', 64; Svartvik, 'East Is East', 175.

³³³ Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 164.

healed leper to make the appropriate sacrifices to Moses (1:44), he wears tassels on his clothing (6:56), and he teaches in the temple (14:49). At the Passover meal Jesus abides by all the traditions (including the final prayers, 14:26), on the cross he quotes a psalm (15:34), and is mocked as the King of the Jews (15:26). He also does not rise on the Sabbath, but waits for the Sunday, and the women and Joseph of Arimathea also abide by the right Jewish practices after Jesus had died (15:42-16:1). Jesus is strict on moral matters of the Law, but is more flexible on ritualistic aspects. But even when he is critiquing the interpretation of the Scriptures, Jesus is still proclaiming their centrality and importance (e.g. 7:10-13; 10:5-9; 12:24-26; 14:49). In fact he frequently appeals to Scriptures in arguments (2:25-26; 10:3-8),³³⁴ and Mark even announces Jesus with Scripture (1:2-3).³³⁵

It is undeniable that the Markan Jesus was Jewish. But this should be unsurprising.³³⁶ Jesus of Nazareth *was* a Jew, born in a Jewish town, who, historically, probably did not preach against the Torah. Mark's sources very probably also portrayed Jesus as a Jew, and Mark did not remove Jesus from his Jewish context. But while the Markan Jesus undeniably paints Jesus as a Jew, foretold by the Jewish Scriptures, and the son of the Jewish god, the Law does not feature at all in Mark's overall theology of Jesus' identity. Even though the Markan Jesus can justifiably be described as Jewish in all of these aspects and more, he consistently denies the validity of ritual aspects of the Torah. When he does speak about aspects of the Law, it is to comment on its moral aspects, and to dismiss or lower its ritualistic aspects. But in his liberal attitude towards the Torah, Mark was not trying to portray Jesus as a Gentile. The Markan Jesus is minimising the ritualistic traditions of Judaism from within Judaism, not as an outsider.

Not all agree that Mark had a liberal stance on the ritual aspects of the Torah.³³⁷ One of the main defenders of Mark's Jewishness is D. Boyarin, who claims that scholars have used Mark 7 as a 'legend of origin' narrative for Jesus' distinction from Judaism.³³⁸ According to Boyarin, Jesus both kept kosher, and constantly defended it in Mark. He also claims that the early dating of Mark stems from a desire to date a Law-free Jesus as early as possible in the Christian story. Overall, he argues that plotting the Markan Jesus as a Law-free figure is nothing more than an attempt to identify Christianity as being completely separate from Judaism as early as possible.³³⁹ Boyarin's stance is problematic in several key ways, and seems to stem from a desire to emphasise the

³³⁴ Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 124.

³³⁵ For some more extensive lists of the Jewish attributes of Jesus in Mark see Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 124; Svartvik, 'East Is East', 175.

³³⁶ Loader agrees. See Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 124.

³³⁷ Svartvik, *Mark and Mission*; Rudolph, 'Food Laws'; Furstenberg, 'New Understanding'; Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 20-22; Bird, 'Mark'; Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 102-28.

³³⁸ Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 105.

³³⁹ Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 106.

historical Jesus' Jewishness – a point which the evidence does not deny (see discussion in previous chapter). But at no point in his analysis does Boyarin distinguish between the historical Jesus and the Markan Jesus, and this is very important. One does not diminish the reality of the Jewish Jesus of Nazareth by acknowledging that the Markan author tried to paint him as leading a new ritualistically Law-free movement.

Scholars who claim that the Markan Jesus abides by the Torah often point out that going against kosher would have been inconceivable for the historical Jesus, a Jew from Nazareth.³⁴⁰ Boyarin is not the only one to have pointed out that the historical Jesus was unlikely to have actually preached against food laws, or to have broken Torah habitually.³⁴¹ However, this factor alone is not enough to warrant a drastic re-interpretation of Mark 7:15, 19b, or the rest of Mark's stance on ritual aspects of the Torah. That Mark largely invented this off-track discussion from the story about hand washing and placed it artificially into his Gospel does not go against anything claimed in this study. In fact, it is fitting that Mark would add details that emphasise a Jesus-approved Law-free gospel.

Too few scholars actually distinguish between Mark the writer and the historical Jesus. The most important aspect of this argument is that Mark has consciously crafted the Gospel narrative so that his Jesus is seen to consistently break down the barriers standing between Jews and Gentiles. It is likely the historical Jesus said nothing about the ritual aspects of the Law, but that does not mean that the *Markan* Jesus did not speak out against such things. The Markan Jesus consistently and explicitly speaks out against ritual aspects of the Torah, regardless of the actions of his historical counterpart. And if the traditions about relaxation of the Torah do not date back to the historical Jesus, then they certainly imply a Markan promotion of the Law-free mission to the Gentiles.³⁴²

Full weight must be given to the consistent stories in Mark where Jesus consciously acts against or teaches against the Torah. These are not occasional occurrences, but are characteristic from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, are emphasised in the midst of the Markan mission to the Gentiles, and form part of the larger picture of Mark and the Gentile mission. This final step confirms that the Markan Jesus not only reaches out to Gentiles without converting them, but actively tones down the ritualistic aspects of the Torah that isolated them from the Jewish tradition.

³⁴⁰ E.g. Rudolph, 'Food Laws', 293; Boyarin, *Jewish Gospels*, 102-28.

³⁴¹ A point widely agreed upon. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 268-69; Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 38-39; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 458; Rudolph, 'Food Laws', 293; Sim, 'Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth', 162-67; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 46-47; Meier, *Marginal Jew 4*, 342-415; Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 174.

³⁴² Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 535.

That Mark was writing from a Gentile setting is a final key factor in assessing his stance on the Law. As was established earlier, Mark is widely thought to have been written from a Gentile context that had evidently limited understanding of Jewish practices, and so assumedly did not follow most of them. With this setting in mind, it is perhaps unsurprising that Mark should pen a Gospel that justified a Law-free faith. In translating a Jewish messianic figure to a Gentile setting, it is perhaps even expected that he would lay the foundations for a Law-free gospel in his story of Jesus, by having him question the ritualistic practices of the Jewish tradition. Perhaps more than anything else then, the Markan Jesus is a Jesus adapted for a Gentile, Law-free audience.

2.3 Chapter 2 Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated that Mark promotes a Law-free Gentile mission, and as such, when seen through the framework of the early church, the second evangelist aligns with the Law-free tradition of the early church. Just as Paul and the Hellenists evangelised to Gentiles without requirement to adhere to the ritualistic aspects of the Torah, so did Mark do the same. Given Mark's Law-free Gentile setting, it is unsurprising that he should provide a Jesus who questions the ritualistic aspects of the Jewish Law.

Mark's law-free Gentile mission is observable in the Markan Jesus' active journeys to Gentile territories in between his ministry to Jewish territories (1:14-9:29), in the stories that promote evangelisation to Gentiles (7:1-8:9), and in the Markan Jesus' dismissive attitude towards certain ritualistic aspects of the Torah (2:23-3:6; 7:1-23). In his reaching out to Gentiles, the Markan Jesus does not require that they follow the Torah; rather he lowers the importance of the Torah, lowering the barriers that might otherwise prevent Gentiles from being invited to the good news. These aspects of Mark's Gospel demonstrate that on the topic of Gentile adherence to the Law, Mark promotes a Law-free Gentile mission. Just like Paul and the Hellenists, the Markan Jesus did not ask Gentiles to accept the ritual aspects of the Torah.

It is pertinent, at this point, to emphasise how soon after Paul's active ministry the Gospel of Mark was written; if Paul died in the early 60s CE, and Mark was written just before or during the Jewish War, then Mark was being composed within ten years of the death of the apostle.³⁴³ As such, Mark's similarities with Paul make their agreement on these issues all the more significant. Just like Paul and the Hellenists, the Markan Jesus' mission to the Gentiles is not an effort to convert them to Judaism or to encourage them to follow the Jewish Law; instead Gentiles are welcomed just as they are. Just as Paul did in his letters, Mark promoted the dismissal of the Law

³⁴³ R. Bauckham theorises that the process of writing a Gospel could have taken years. Bauckham, 'For Whom Were the Gospels Written?', 36.

for Gentiles. Just as Paul promoted the moral aspects of the Torah, so too did Mark. Mark also displays Jesus as an active evangeliser to the Gentiles, a role Paul consistently saw himself as fulfilling (Rom. 11:13 cf. 15:16; Gal. 1:16; 2:8, 9). The question of a more direct connection between Mark and Paul will be taken up in the final chapter of this study.

What is further of importance is that Mark's community *was* a Gentile community in the first century, which evidently did not see it as a requirement to follow the entire Torah. As such, Mark's portrayal of Jesus as an advocate of a Law-free Gentile mission can also be said to be legitimising and even justifying his own community's faith. On this point, it is useful to again note that Mark not only establishes that the Gentile mission was one that Jesus himself initiated, but his narrative implies that during Jesus' ministry, this increasingly came the mission that was the most important to him.

It is possible that Mark's entire theology of the Law can be seen through the lens of the Gentile mission he espouses. In advocating a Gentile mission that does not require newcomers to convert to Judaism, Mark is endorsing a radical idea that some ritualistic aspects of the Torah are no longer required. A mission to the Gentiles *as* Gentiles necessitates breaking the Law to some extent. This link is not explicit, but it is implied in the foundational principles of Mark's Gentile mission. This Law-free Gentile mission alone then is possibly enough to demonstrate that Mark did not uphold the entire Torah.

In light of this, it is even more likely that the ancient tradition that Mark wrote down the testimony of Peter is inaccurate; Peter was associated with a Law-abiding gospel for Gentiles, whereas Mark is more accurately described as promoting a Law-free gospel. The discussion here has seen that once the context of the early church is taken into account, Mark cannot be said to be a Petrine Gospel. Given the historical unlikelihood of Peter being the source of Mark's Gospel, there is speculation as to why this attribution occurred in the first place. J. Marcus suggests that some second century church leaders were interested in linking all the Gospels with authoritative figures from the New Testament in order to support the credibility of these Gospels over the Gnostic gospels.³⁴⁴ Significantly for this present discussion, some have suggested that Mark was attributed to Peter for reasons related to the divide in the church between Law-free and Law-abiding movements, and the attribution to Peter was done in an effort to 'claim' the Markan Gospel for the Law-abiding tradition, thus denying the credit of such a document to the Law-free movement.³⁴⁵ In light of the findings of this chapter, such a scenario can be deemed possible.

³⁴⁴ Marcus, 'Mark', 859; Elmer, 'Papias Notice on Mark', 686-93.

³⁴⁵ See W. Braun, 'The First Shall Be Last: The Gospel of Mark after the First Century', in *Chasing Down Religions: In the Sights of History and the Cognitive Sciences*, ed. P. Pachis and D. Wiebe (Thessaloniki:

K. B. Larsen has suggested that the purpose of the Gospel genre was to give authority to ideas and traditions that had formed in the second and third generations since Christ's death,³⁴⁶ and this is certainly arguable for Mark, who was the first to write such a narrative. In portraying his Jesus as the initiator of the Law-free gospel to the Gentiles, Mark can be said to be laying the historical ground work for a Law-free Gentile mission. In justifying the Law-free gospel in the words and actions of Jesus himself, Mark does not need to justify his position theologically (as Paul had so tortuously attempted). Instead, Mark uses Jesus' own authority as his foundation;³⁴⁷ he presents a Law-free gospel in the very words and actions of the founder of the movement himself. One of Mark's overarching achievements then, was to present his Jesus as laying the foundation for a Law-free mission to the Gentiles; as such the second Gospel comfortably aligns with those who advocated for a Law-free gospel to Gentiles in the early church.

Barbounakis, 2010), 41-57; M. Kok, *The Gospel on the Margins: The Reception of Mark in the Second Century* (Lanham: Fortress Press, 2015), 267-69.

³⁴⁶ Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 187.

³⁴⁷ Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 183.

Chapter 3: The Law and the Gentile Mission in Matthew

The next part of this study involves placing Matthew in the context of the early church. It is almost universally agreed that the first canonical Gospel was written after Mark,³⁴⁸ though the time between Gospels is uncertain. The Jewish character of the Matthean Gospel is also widely noted, and is seen in the frequent fulfilment quotations inserted into the narrative (e.g. 1:22-23), the emphasis on the enduring importance of the Torah (e.g. 5:17-19), efforts to draw a typology between Jesus and Moses,³⁴⁹ and the possible structure of Matthean discourses into five discernible groups, reflecting the Pentateuch.³⁵⁰ There are smaller indications of this identity as well, such as his omission of Mark's explanatory material (Mark 7:3 cf. Matt. 15:1), the inclusion of a genealogy at the beginning of his narrative (1:1-17), and concern about flight on the Sabbath (24:20). Such features in the Matthean narrative are evidence that the Matthean author made concerted efforts to portray Jesus as a Messiah who was firmly planted in the Jewish tradition.

While Matthew is often regarded as the most Jewish of all New Testament texts, arguments over whether Matthew should be considered as still being within 'Judaism' (*intra muros*) or whether he is more accurately described as external to Judaism (*extra muros*) are still not resolved, even after decades of discussion. While it is mostly accepted in current scholarship that Matthew was *intra muros*,³⁵¹ there are still a lot of scholars who think that Matthew had renounced Judaism,³⁵² and there are even claims that Matthew himself was Gentile rather than Jewish.³⁵³ It is

³⁴⁸ As stated in the introduction, Markan priority is assumed in this thesis.

³⁴⁹ On this, see notably Allison, *New Moses*.

³⁵⁰ First put forward by B. W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (London: Constable & Company, 1930), 80-90. Disputed by Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 14-24.

³⁵¹ Bacon, *Studies in Matthew*, 132; Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 242; M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew: The Speaker's Lectures in Biblical Studies 1969-71* (London: SPCK, 1974); W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew 1-7* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 17; Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, esp. 26; D. C. Sim, 'The Gospel of Matthew and the Gentiles,' *JSNT* 57 (1995), 19-48; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 343-49; F. J. Murphy, 'The Jewishness of Matthew: Another Look', in *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini*, ed. A. J. Avery-Peck, D. J. Harrington, and J. Neusner (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 377-403; D. J. Harrington, 'Problems and Opportunities in Matthew's Gospel,' *CurTM* 34 (2007), 417-23, 421; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 45-47; D. M. Gurtner, 'Matthew's Theology of the Temple and the "Parting of the Ways": Christian Origins and the First Gospel', in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. D. M. Gurtner and J. Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 128-53, esp. 153; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, xvii-xviii, 327. D. C. Sim wrote in 2013 that the Jewish nature of Matthew is now 'virtually unchallenged'. D. C. Sim, 'The Attitude to Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew', in *Attitudes to Gentiles in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. D. C. Sim and J. S. McLaren (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 173-90, 174.

³⁵² G. N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 124; J. D. Charles, 'Garnishing the "Greater Righteousness": The Disciple's Relationship to the Law (Matthew 5:17-20),' *BBR* 12 (2002), 1-15, 2; P. Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Gundry, *Old Is Better*, 111-22; J. Thachuparamban, *Jesus and the Law in the Matthean Community: A Source- and Redaction-Critical Study of Mt 5,38-48* (Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2011), esp. 321. C. M. Tuckett interestingly points out that the labels which are used today to describe the position of the Matthean community are not what the Matthean community would have used to distinguish or define themselves. See C. M. Tuckett, 'Matthew:

evident from the Gospel itself that Matthew's community no longer had contact with or worshipped alongside traditional or Formative Judaism. This much is clear from repeated reference to 'their synagogues' (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54; also 'your synagogues' in 23:34), as well as in Matthew's references to his own community by a different term, ἡ ἐκκλησία (16:18; 18:18). While it is evident that the Matthean community considered themselves as separate from Jewish leadership, the implications for this separation from the synagogue are disagreed upon.

Some interpret this evidence as an indication that Matthew had abandoned the Jewish tradition. In this interpretation the Matthean Jesus holds such wrath for not only Formative Judaism, but Judaism generally (27:25).³⁵⁴ Matthew is thus better seen as a Christian than belonging to Judaism. Alongside these signs of separation, in this argument Matthew's use of the term ἡ ἐκκλησία to describe his own community is paralleled with Paul's, where it is used to refer to Gentile communities (e.g. Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2). Further, Matthew's parable of the vineyard (21:33-42), with the ending that the Kingdom of God has been taken away from the chief priests and Pharisees, is seen as a rejection of all Judaism.³⁵⁵ Finally, the reference to rumours about Jesus' body spread among the Jews (28:15) is seen as an indicator of Matthew's disassociation from the Jews.³⁵⁶ However, these aspects of Matthew can still be explained while maintaining the Jewishness of Matthew. The conflicts with Formative Judaism and reference to 'their synagogues' can comfortably be seen as inter-Jewish arguments between Matthew and the *leadership* of Judaism, not Judaism as a whole. Secondly, while Matthew does refer to his community as ἡ ἐκκλησία, this term itself is not exclusive to Gentile communities; Paul himself used it to refer to Christian communities in Judea (Gal. 1:22; 1 Thess. 2:14), as well as all churches (Rom. 16:16).³⁵⁷ Thirdly, Matthew's parable of the vineyard is explicitly meant as a rejection of the Jewish leaders (21:45), but not of Israel as a whole, which are represented by the vineyard (21:33) and so are not rejected.³⁵⁸ Finally, Matthew's reference to 'the Jews' does not necessarily exclude himself from that label, as is elsewhere demonstrated by Josephus' frequent use of the word (Ἰουδαῖος; e.g. *Ant.* 1:4, 6).³⁵⁹

The Social and Historical Context – Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?', in *The Gospel of Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity*, ed. D. Senior (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011), 99-129, 100.

³⁵³ K. Clark, 'The Gentile Bias in Matthew,' *JBL* 66 (1947), 165-72; G. Strecker, *Der Weg Der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung Zur Theologie Des Matthäus*, Third ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971); J. P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 17-25.

³⁵⁴ Meier, *Vision of Matthew*, 18.

³⁵⁵ Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 140.

³⁵⁶ E.g. Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 131, 179.

³⁵⁷ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 144.

³⁵⁸ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 148-49.

³⁵⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 149-50.

Instead, Matthew is best seen as still being within Judaism. Despite his conflicts with Jewish leadership, Matthew's explicit loyalty to the Law, frequent fulfilment quotations, and typology with Old Testament figures demonstrate his loyalty to the Jewish tradition. Further, as this chapter will explore, Matthew's idea of the Kingdom of God was one where Gentiles would be welcomed in, not *as* Gentiles (as per Mark), but as future Jews. Matthew was not abandoning Judaism, but expanding it.

Discussion and analysis in this chapter will demonstrate that Matthew's Gospel promotes a Law-abiding gospel for Gentiles. The structure of this chapter's discussion will focus first on the Torah before moving on to how these ideas of the Torah are to be applied to the Gentile mission. Matthew's strong commitment to the Torah is consistent throughout the narrative and is seen in various ways; in Jesus' explicit statements about the continuing relevance of the Law (5:17-19) and in the theme of judgement. With this unswerving commitment to the Torah, when the risen Jesus commissions a mission to the nations in the final scene of the Gospel (28:16-20), Matthew's commitment to the Torah remains intact. It will be seen that Matthew's Gentile mission was one that offered to open up Judaism from what was once a relatively closed covenant to a universal covenant where the rules of the Torah were not abolished but would now apply to all.

Matthew's imitation of and strong reliance on Mark for material and chronology demonstrate that the first evangelist liked Mark as a document and narrative.³⁶⁰ Mark was the very basis of the entire idea of the Matthean Gospel, and Matthew adopts some 90% of Markan material.³⁶¹ The Markan structure is also adopted by Matthew, and any new material is inserted into this Markan framework. Matthew also inherently shares in a lot of Markan beliefs and ideas about Jesus, but, as this chapter will discuss, Matthew had some significant differences from his primary source. Looking at Matthew as a redactor will demonstrate the ways he has understood, modified, and reconstructed Mark's story into his own edition. Noting the changes Matthew has made to Markan stories will also signal where he might actively disagree with his source, but Matthew's views are also seen through exclusively Matthean material, structures, and narrative features. So although Matthew relied heavily on Mark and his changes are important, Matthew still needs to be analysed as a Gospel and narrative in itself.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ On this point, see the work of J. A. Doole, who proposes that the way Matthew imitated Mark was purely out of respect for his primary source. Doole, *What Was Mark for Matthew?* For a different take on Matthew's use of Mark, see Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark'.

³⁶¹ A figure first put forward by Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 151.

³⁶² These two different aspects of 'redaction criticism' are highlighted by Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 20-21.

3.1 The Law in Matthew

The Law was an integral part of the Gospel's theology. Many commentators recognise that Matthew's stance on the Torah is more conservative than Mark's, and several have noted that Matthew has deliberately changed the Markan narrative so that it portrays a Jesus who is more closely aligned with the Jewish Law.³⁶³ Discussion in this section will first look at Matthew's insistence *that* the Law be consistently obeyed, where it will be seen that Matthew expected the Torah to remain fully in force in light of Jesus' ministry. This will be followed by discussion of *how* Matthew expected the Law to be obeyed, where Jesus' interpretation of the Torah is considered ultimately authoritative. And finally, it will be seen how the Law fits into the larger themes of divine judgement that pervade the Gospel, and that the correct obedience to the Law had eschatological consequences.

The most significant and explicit passage for Matthew and the Law is, of course, Matthew 5:17-19, part of Matthew's first teaching block, in which the Matthean Jesus says;

Do not think (Μὴ νομίσητε) that I have come to abolish the law (νόμος) or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil (πληρώω). For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth may pass away, one letter or one stroke of a letter will not pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

The meaning of Jesus' words is explicit. These three sayings express the fundamental attitudes the Matthean Jesus held towards the Law; firstly, that his role was not to abolish the Law or the prophets, but to fulfil them, secondly, that the entire Torah, even the smallest aspect of it, is always valid, and thirdly, that the Law must subsequently be kept in its entirety in order for one to be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.³⁶⁴ Given its directness, 5:17-19 is the single most important passage on the Law in Matthew and various aspects of the passage highlight its importance. Firstly, the Christological effect of the words, 'Truly I tell you',³⁶⁵ emphasise the significance of this saying.³⁶⁶ Secondly, its place within the Matthean narrative gives prominence to this collection of sayings; they are part of the all-important Sermon on the Mount, the pinnacle of the Matthean Jesus' teaching, and the part of the Gospel that sets the standards for the values of the Matthean community. Thirdly, they are also the Matthean Jesus' first words about the Law, and

³⁶³ Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 136; Harrington, 'Problems and Opportunities', 422; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 36-41; Sim, 'Matthew's Use of Mark', 180-81; M. Müller, 'The New Testament Gospels as Biblical Rewritings,' *ST* 68 (2014), 21-40, 180-81.

³⁶⁴ This break down of 5:17-19 was highlighted by Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 481.

³⁶⁵ C. E. Carlston and C. A. Evans, *From Synagogue to Ecclesia: Matthew's Community at the Crossroads* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 115.

³⁶⁶ 5:18 is the first time Jesus uses them in the Gospel, but throughout he frequently prefaces his teaching with these words. See 5:26; 6:2, 5, 16; 8:10; 10:15, 23, 42; 11:11; 13:17; 16:28; 17:20; 18:2, 13, 18, 19; 19:23, 28; 21:21, 31; 23:36; 24:2; 24:34, 47; 25:12, 40, 45; 26:13; 21, 34;

as such, could be said to frame the entire Gospel's teaching of the Law.³⁶⁷ Fourthly, they are also Jesus' first words about the significance of his coming.³⁶⁸

This passage also makes clear connections to the other key aspects of Matthew and the Torah; Jesus' all-important interpretation of the Law, and the dramatic consequences it has for larger ideas about the divine judgement. Jesus' words that he is to *fulfil* (πληρῶ) the Torah are crucial; B. Repschinski notes that Jesus' *fulfilment* of Torah does not merely mean that he will obey and keep it and encourage others to do so, but that the Torah will be actualised with Jesus' ministry.³⁶⁹ This connection between Jesus' teaching and the fulfilment of the Torah is soon explained in the antitheses, where Jesus explains how his teaching is designed to upkeep the Law.³⁷⁰ And the apocalyptic language in this passage (5:18, 19) draws the validity of the entire Law into the larger themes of righteousness, judgement, and entrance into the Kingdom of God. Both of these aspects of the Law in Matthew will be discussed in some detail below.

The purpose of Matt. 5:17-19 can (and has) been taken in several ways. Some scholars see this passage as a direct attack against Christians who preached a Law-free Gospel.³⁷¹ Proponents of this theory argue that the negative language of Μὴ νομίσητε probably indicates that an alternative (i.e. Law-free) attitude existed and was in Matthew's mind when writing.³⁷² Alternatively, some have seen 5:17 not as an attack on Christians who *do* think that Jesus abolished the Law, but as a defence, against accusations that the *Matthean* community had not been following the Law.³⁷³ Some of these go further, and suggest that 5:17-20 was a specific defence against accusations put forth by the Pharisees.³⁷⁴ Some also contend that Matthew had both intentions in mind,³⁷⁵ or that it

³⁶⁷ See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 126-27. K. Snodgrass suggests that Matthew rushes through the first part of Jesus' ministry (4:12-25) in order to get to the most significant part of Jesus' teaching; the Law. See K. Snodgrass, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law,' *Int.* 46 (1992), 368-78, 372.

³⁶⁸ E. Culliver, 'Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel: Matthew and First-Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate,' *NTS* 55 (2009), 144-59, 148.

³⁶⁹ B. Repschinski, 'Shift the Issue and Win the Fight? Rhetorical Strategies of Dealing with Conflicts in Matthew's Gospel'. (paper presented at the Asia-Pacific Early Christian Studies Society Eleventh Annual Conference, Melbourne, 2017), 4.

³⁷⁰ Repschinski, 'Shift the Issue and Win the Fight? Rhetorical Strategies of Dealing with Conflicts in Matthew's Gospel', 4-6.

³⁷¹ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 256; Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 64-65, 159; R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. J. Marsh (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 138, 163; R. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung Zwischen Kirche Und Judentum Im Matthäusevangelium* (Munich: Kaiser, 1966), 64; F. W. Beare, *The Gospel According to Matthew: Translation, Introduction and Commentary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 141; Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition'; D. Wenham, 'The Rock on Which to Build: Some Mainly Pauline Observations About the Sermon on the Mount', in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. D. M. Gurtner and J. Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 187-206, 200.

³⁷² See Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 165-66.

³⁷³ Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 49; D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* (Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 104; Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 164; M. Thiessen, 'Abolishers of the Law in Early Judaism in Matthew 5,17-20,' *Bib* 93 (2012), 543-56.

³⁷⁴ So explaining the sudden reference to the Pharisees in 5:20. Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 86.

can be traced back to the historical Jesus.³⁷⁶ Others argue that this passage was motivated by other agendas. R. Deines suggested that this statement is a reaction to the beatitudes (5:3-11), in which people are promised to partake in the Kingdom without the Law and the prophets. Such a statement, he suggests, gave rise to the need for such a defence.³⁷⁷ Similarly, several have argued that it was inserted as a preface to the upcoming content of the antitheses (5:21-48).³⁷⁸ S. J. Joseph says that this passage corrects the impression, stated in Q (Luke 16:16), that the Law had ended with John the Baptist.³⁷⁹ S. Byrskog suggests that the entire passage is directed at the disciples (5:1).³⁸⁰ U. Luz even says the sayings are not a polemic at all, noting the similar negative wording in 10:34.³⁸¹ And A. Runesson suggests that while conflicts with external groups about the relevance of the Law were present issues, 5:17-19 is still explainable within Matthew's story on its own.³⁸² This is clearly a highly contentious passage and trying to determine the targets of this sentiment is highly uncertain. The question of whether 5:17-19 was directed at specifically Pauline ideas is taken up again in the final chapter of this study, but for now, it does not much matter *who* this passage is aimed at, whether in defence or an attack. What this passage inarguably demonstrates is that the Matthean community saw themselves as following the entirety of the Law.

However, in 5:18, Jesus does seem to put a concrete limit on the Law's validity; '*until heaven and earth may pass away*, one letter or one stroke will not pass from the Law *until all is accomplished*'. J. P. Meier has suggested that Jesus is here referring to his own death and resurrection,³⁸³ and so the consequence of such an interpretation would be that by the end of Matthew's Gospel, the Law has indeed become invalid.³⁸⁴ However, there are some strong arguments against such an interpretation. Most prominent is that if Jesus' death and resurrection were meant to abolish the Torah, then this contradicts Jesus' words in 5:17; it would mean that Jesus in fact *did* come to abolish the Torah.³⁸⁵ Jesus' words in 5:17 thus automatically discount a reading of 5:18 as meaning that it was until Jesus' coming that the Law remained in place.³⁸⁶ The

³⁷⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 501; Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 284, n. 182; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 166.d

³⁷⁶ W. D. Davies, *Christian Origins and Judaism* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962), 31-66.

³⁷⁷ R. Deines, 'Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew – an Ongoing Debate', in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. D. M. Gurtner and J. Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 53-84, 73-74.

³⁷⁸ J. P. Meier, *Matthew* (Dublin: Veritas, 1980), 46; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 481-82; Snodgrass, 'Matthew's Understanding', 372.

³⁷⁹ S. J. Joseph, "'For Heaven and Earth to Pass Away?': Reexamining Q 16,16-18, Eschatology and the Law,' *ZNW* 105 (2014), 169-88, 184.

³⁸⁰ S. Byrskog, 'Matthew 5:17-18 in the Argumentation of Context,' *RB* 104 (1997), 557-71.

³⁸¹ 'Do not think (Μὴ νομίσητε) I have come to bring peace on earth'. See Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 213, n. 28.

³⁸² Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 63.

³⁸³ J. P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel: A Redactional Study of Mt. 5:17-48* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 30-35.

³⁸⁴ Meier, *Matthew*, 367.

³⁸⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 125.

³⁸⁶ Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 169. A. J. Levine also notes that the mention of heaven and earth in 28:18 shows that heaven and earth still exist at the end of the Gospel, and that Jesus' coming or

Hebrew Scriptures also provide precedence, where these kind of expressions actually mean ‘never’ (Jer. 31:35-36; 33:20-21, 25-26; Job 14:2; Ps. 72:5, 7, 17).³⁸⁷ Most scholars see Jesus’ words in 5:18 as either a reference to the Parousia and proceeding divine judgement that Matthew’s Gospel focuses on,³⁸⁸ or that these words are meant to imply that the Law does not actually have a foreseeable end-date.³⁸⁹ Whichever of these scenarios was Matthew’s intention, the message is that the Law will last as long as life on earth does.³⁹⁰

There is no room to go into finer detail on 5:17-19. But, helpfully, the Matthean Jesus’ words in this passage are extremely plain; he is advocating upholding the entire Torah, and so, it can reasonably be expected that the Matthean community held the same standard.³⁹¹ This passage is also helpful for seeing Matthew’s entire outlook on the Law.³⁹² Even if the Gospel itself has some stories where the Matthean Jesus can be said to breach Torah,³⁹³ the three sayings in 5:17-19, as well as the overall message of Matthew’s Gospel, means that the Matthean community held onto the enduring validity of the Torah as a whole.³⁹⁴

The continuing importance of the Torah is also expressed in smaller ways throughout the Gospel. Some have argued that Matthew’s saying about the narrow path (7:13-14) is implicitly about following the way of the Law,³⁹⁵ or that Matthew is referring to the Law in 13:52, when he

resurrection did not actually do away with them and so the Law still stands in full. See Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 180.

³⁸⁷ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 185.

³⁸⁸ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 490; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 88, n. 46; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 125.

³⁸⁹ Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 65; Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 211; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 218.

³⁹⁰ Snodgrass, ‘Matthew’s Understanding’, 373.

³⁹¹ R. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 9; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 86-87; Harrington, *Matthew*, 84; Saldarini, *Matthew’s Community*, 161, 284 n. 182; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 124-27; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 165-72. However not all agree. E. Käsemann says that Matthew did not understand the sayings in the literal sense; E. Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM, 1969), 85. D. R. A. Hare points out that those who break the Law are not *excluded* from the Kingdom of Heaven, merely considered least; D. R. A. Hare, ‘How Jewish Is the Gospel of Matthew?’, *CBQ* 62 (2000), 264-77, 271. P. Foster writes that 5:17-20 should not be seen as proof of a Law-observant Matthean community because Matthew has Jesus consistently (and immediately) redefine the Torah; Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 211.

³⁹² A few scholars have pointed out Matthew’s use of the phrase ‘Law and prophets’ both here in 5:17 and in 7:12 is significant; that Matthew in 7:12 is deliberately recalling 5:17, making the entire Sermon on the Mount within the Law and prophets framework. See Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 75; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 184.

³⁹³ E.g. See Sanders on Matt. 8:28, not letting the disciples bury their deceased parents. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 252.

³⁹⁴ ‘In Matthew’s eyes the tension between Jesus’ teaching and the Mosaic commandments was much less than in the eyes of many modern scholars’. Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 492.

³⁹⁵ E.g. Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 185; Evans, *Matthew*, 170; T. R. Blanton IV, ‘Saved by Obedience: Matthew 1:21 in Light of Jesus’ Teaching on the Torah,’ *JBL* 132 (2013), 393-413, 408. The imagery of the ‘two ways’ is traditional Jewish imagery, often cited in terms of Jewish moral theology

talks about the Scribe bringing new treasures as well as old.³⁹⁶ The imagery of ‘binding’ and ‘loosing’ in Jesus’ proclamation to Peter at Caesarea Philippi (16:18-19 cf. 18:18) also has strong ties to Jewish literature and interpretation of the Law.³⁹⁷ Matthew’s fondness of the term νόμος is also important to draw attention to as it highlights the focus on the Law that he brings to the Gospel material.³⁹⁸ He uses it eight times in his Gospel (5:17, 18; 7:12; 11:13; 12:5; 22:36, 40; 23:23), whereas Mark never used it. Furthermore, Matthew has added the word three times into Markan contexts (12:5; 22:36, 40).³⁹⁹ Alongside this, Matthew’s use of the word ἀνομία is also relevant here (7:23; 13:41; 23:28; 24:12). On all four occasions, the word is unique to Matthew. Twice, he uses this word to describe those who are condemned (7:23; 13:41). He also says that the Pharisees are full of lawlessness (23:28). But the intended meaning of ἀνομία is still disputed. Whilst meaning outside of Matthew is generally taken to mean wickedness or sin, the prominence of the Law in Matthew has prompted some to say that in Matthew it has specific connotations about the Law itself. Some say it refers to those who do not practice the Torah,⁴⁰⁰ while others say that it does not.⁴⁰¹ In any case, this specific word is of minor consequence to the larger argument; for Matthew, the Law plays a fundamental role in Matthean theology, morality, and identity, regardless of his intended meaning for ἀνομία. Whether he was taking aim at those who did *not* follow the Torah will be re-visited in the final chapter of this study.

As can be seen, the enduring validity and importance of the Law is very in clear in Matthew.⁴⁰² But further to insisting that the Torah was still in effect, the Matthean Jesus offers an

(seen in Jer. 21:8; Ps. 1:6; Deut. 11:26-29); T. Asher 1.3-5; 2 Enoch 30.15; *b. Ber.* 28b; *Mek.* on Exodus 14.28); Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 695. Matthew has also added eschatological language that is not in Luke; ‘leads to destruction’, and ‘leads to life’.

³⁹⁶ W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew 8-18* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 447; Hagner, *Matthew*, 402; C. S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 393. J. P. Meier writes that it refers to the Law and the prophets’ (Meier, *Matthew*, 153-54), and Hare, that it is the Scripture of Israel (D. R. A. Hare, *Matthew* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 159. F. W. Beare disagrees, suggesting that the ‘old’ refers to the teaching of Jesus, and the ‘new’ the teaching of the evangelist (Beare, *Matthew*, 317).

³⁹⁷ E.g. En. 40:9-11; *bSanh* 113a, from Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 219. For an extended list see Keener, *Matthew*, 455, n. 25.

³⁹⁸ 15:6 ‘So, for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God’; τὸν λόγον (the word). Some versions of the text have τὸν νόμον (the Law). Or even τὸν ἐντολὴν (the commandment). K. Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: Greek-English Edition of the Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*, Fourteenth ed. (Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2009), 142.

³⁹⁹ Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 16.

⁴⁰⁰ Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 74-75, 162; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 203-07; Blanton IV, ‘Saved by Obedience’, 403-04; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 76, n. 79.

⁴⁰¹ C. E. Carlston, ‘The Things That Defile (Mark 7:14) and the Law in Matthew and Mark,’ *NTS* 15 (1968-69), 75-96, 85; R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 6; Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 16-17; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 718-19; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 158; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 186; Deines, ‘Not the Law’, 62.

⁴⁰² The idea of the Law being integral to Jewish self-identity in the larger context of the Israelite covenant has elsewhere been explored in non-Matthean contexts, but is still helpful here. Most notably is E. P. Sanders, who defined ‘covenantal nomism’, the idea that covenant is key to interpreting Jewish

authoritative interpretation of the Law, and it is the Law – as interpreted by Jesus – that Matthew promotes. Consistently in his teaching, the Matthean Jesus emphasises the importance of love, mercy, and the golden rule for interpreting the Law,⁴⁰³ and these principles are demonstrated in several examples of Jesus’ teaching about the Law.

The importance of the golden rule for following the Law is explicitly highlighted in the Sermon on the Mount. In his teaching discourse, the Matthean Jesus proclaims; ‘In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets’ (7:12). A similar saying is found in Luke 6:31, but the reference to the law and the prophets is absent in the Lukan version, and so appears to have been added by Matthew. Here the Matthean Jesus has explicitly stated that the law and the prophets can be summarised in this golden rule. In Matthew’s version of the story about plucking grain on the Sabbath (12:1-8), the Pharisees question Jesus about whether his disciples’ actions are permitted. In one of his responses to them, the Matthean Jesus rebukes them by saying, ‘Go and learn what this means, “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice”’ (12:7), citing Hosea 6:6. Here, the Matthean Jesus has explicitly brought in the principle of mercy into his argument about interpreting the Law. The golden rule is again highlighted when a rich man asks Jesus how he can inherit eternal life (19:16-22). In his response, the Matthean Jesus says that the commandments must be kept, and he lists the same commandments as Mark and Luke do in their versions (to not kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness, and to honour his parents), but Matthew adds a new commandment to the list; ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’ (19:19). That Matthew has added this commandment to the list of those that one must keep to have eternal life demonstrates the emphasis this command had in his interpretation of the Law, once again emphasising the importance of the golden rule in fulfilment of this Law. When a Pharisee asks Jesus which commandment in the law is the greatest (22:34-40), in Jesus’ response the golden rule is again highlighted as being crucial to fulfilment of the Law. Jesus responds by citing the commandment to love God, and the commandment to love your neighbour as yourself, concluding with, ‘On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets’. Matthew’s additions to Mark’s and Luke’s versions are telling here (cf. Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28); he has firstly added that the discussion is explicitly about the Law (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ), and he has added the summary

understanding of their position in God’s cosmic plan. According to Sanders, a direct and proper response to one’s inclusion in the covenant necessitates obedience to the covenant’s commandments and laws. Moreover, in his extensive survey of the literature, the association between covenant and the commandment was found to be ‘almost universal’ in Jewish literature. Thus, even though the concept of the law in relation to the covenant is not explicitly acknowledged in Matthew, it very likely was dominant in Matthean thought. See E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977), esp. 75, 420. See also Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 172-205.

⁴⁰³ That these principles are foundational to Matthew’s interpretation of the Law; Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 75-85; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 85; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 127-29; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 264-66; Luz, *Studies*, 187; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 68.

at the end of his answer that on these two commandments hang the entire Law and Prophets. Once again, the Matthean Jesus has cited the golden rule as a central part of the Law. Finally, the hermeneutical principles of love and mercy are also highlighted in the series of woes to the Pharisees (231-36); Jesus accuses them of having ‘neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith’. Once again, mercy has been named as an important part of practice of the Law, one that the Pharisees have neglected.⁴⁰⁴

For Matthew, then, the Law is to be fully obeyed and interpreted through the hermeneutical keys of love, mercy, and the golden rule. However, this understanding of Matthew and the Law is not always accepted. There are multiple passages in Matthew’s Gospel that have been interpreted not as examples of the Matthean Jesus interpreting the Law, but as examples of the Matthean Jesus actually dismissing the Torah and replacing it with his own teaching.

One of the most prominent examples referred to in this argument is the so-called antitheses (5:21-48), which follow the triple statements of 5:17-19. This group of six sayings feature the Matthean Jesus citing a rule from the Torah, and following this with a rule of his own teaching. This is sometimes seen as Jesus replacing the old Law with his new rules.⁴⁰⁵ However, this is not the case for several key reasons. Firstly, The Matthean language in each antithesis’ introduction (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν) is not particularly oppositional, despite the common English translations such as the NRSV, which translate δὲ as ‘but’, adding a particularly contradictory tone to Jesus’ additional teachings. However, unlike the term ἀλλά, δὲ does not always signal a contradiction. Davies and Allison point out that ἀλλά *can* translate in English as ‘but’, but can also mean ‘yet’ or ‘and’.⁴⁰⁶ As such, there is nothing necessarily contradictory in Jesus’ words here. Instead, a more accurate translation for these passages would be; ‘You have heard that it was said... *and* I say to you...’ Secondly, 5:21-48 also needs to be taken in its wider narrative context: the preceding passages 5:17-19, which make clear the unswerving validity of the Law, make it unlikely that Matthew saw the content in 5:21-48 as setting aside the Torah.⁴⁰⁷ If the antitheses were indeed

⁴⁰⁴ When Jesus is later warning about future persecutions, he foretells that ‘because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold’ (24:12), essentially placing love and lawlessness (ἀνομία) as opposites of each other. Snodgrass, ‘Matthew’s Understanding’, 370.

⁴⁰⁵ Meier, *Matthew*, 50-51. With a rather different meaning, quite a few scholars claim that the Matthean Jesus was contradicting not the Law itself, but an (incorrect) interpretation of the Law. See G. Bornkamm, ‘End-Expectation and Church in Matthew’, in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (London: SCM, 1963), 15-51, 25; Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 158; Evans, *Matthew*, 120; Carlston and Evans, *Synagogue to Ecclesia*, 204, n.74.

⁴⁰⁶ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 507.

⁴⁰⁷ Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 173.

intended as *antitheses*, then there is an immediate and obvious contradiction with the three statements about the enduring validity of the Law in 5:17-19.⁴⁰⁸

Matt. 5:21-48 does not show a Jesus who is disregarding the Torah, but instead shows a Jesus who teaches the heart of the Law. In these passages, Jesus condemns not only the actions that go against the Law, but the attitudes which lie behind such actions.⁴⁰⁹ For the Matthean Jesus, not only is murder unlawful, but even thinking angrily is unlawful (5:21-26). Not only committing adultery, but thinking adulterous thoughts (5:27-30). Not only should one not swear falsely, one should not swear at all (5:33-37). In these sayings, Jesus is attempting to ‘build fences around the Torah’ (*m. Abot.* 1:1).⁴¹⁰ The antitheses then are not a new Law, but are more of the same Law.⁴¹¹ Some scholars break down the individual antitheses, and claim that some do contradict Torah,⁴¹² but this is probably a case of modern scholars being more systematic than Matthew himself was. As D. C. Sim points out, the only real question is whether a Torah-defying understanding of 5:21-48 was what Matthew had anticipated. 5:17-19 thus makes such an intention for the antitheses difficult to justify.⁴¹³ Similarly to this example, the Matthean Jesus’ later instruction against divorce (19:3-9), which was sanctioned by the Torah, should also not be seen as being oppositional to the Law.⁴¹⁴ As E. P. Sanders has pointed out, ‘Moses did not command divorce, he permitted

⁴⁰⁸ Some scholars have pointed out that Matthew’s call to a better righteousness in 5:20 is thus explained in 5:21-48. See J. Levison, ‘A Better Righteousness: The Character and Purpose of Matthew 5:21-48,’ *SBT* 12 (1982), 171-94; Snodgrass, ‘Matthew’s Understanding’, 374-75; D. Garlington, ‘The “Better Righteousness”: Matthew 5:20,’ *BBR* 20 (2010), 479-502, 492-98. P. Foster highlights the use of *δικαιοσύνη* (righteousness) in both 5:20 and 6:1 forms an inclusive whole around the antitheses. Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 161.

⁴⁰⁹ That Jesus does not set aside the Torah in 5:21-48; Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 83; Levison, ‘Better Righteousness’; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 506-09; Harrington, *Matthew*, 84; Allison, *New Moses*, 182-84; Saldarini, *Matthew’s Community*, 162; K. Snodgrass, ‘Matthew and the Law’, in *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, ed. D. R. Bauer and M. A. Powell (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 99-127, 122; A. Chester, ‘Messianism, Torah and Early Christian Tradition’, in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. G. N. Stanton and G. G. Strousma (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 318-41, 321; D. Senior, *Matthew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 76, 81; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 129-30; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 173; Deines, ‘Not the Law’, 64; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 66, 94. Blanton IV also notes the similarities to the *Damascus Document*, see Blanton IV, ‘Saved by Obedience’, 406-07.

⁴¹⁰ B. L. White, ‘The Eschatological Conversion of “All the Nations” in Matthew 28:19:20: (Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul,’ *JSNT* 36 (2014), 353-82, 357.

⁴¹¹ Chester, ‘Messianism, Torah and Early Christian Tradition’, 321.

⁴¹² Bornkamm, ‘End-Expectation in Matthew’, 25; Meier, *Law and History*, 159; E. Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, trans. D. E. Green (London: SPCK, 1976), 110; R. A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco: Word Books, 1982), 257-68.

⁴¹³ See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 129.

⁴¹⁴ On this point, G. Barth argues that while Mark argues directly against the Mosaic Law, Matthew’s debate is only about the grounds on which divorce may be granted. See Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 95.

it'.⁴¹⁵ Commanding a stricter adherence to the Law, as Jesus does in this example and in 5:21-48, is not going against the Law.⁴¹⁶ It in fact promotes a greater adherence to it.

Jesus' statements that the 'Law and the prophets' are – or depend on – the golden rule (7:12) and the double love commandment (22:36-40) are likewise not movements to dismiss or replace the rest of the Law.⁴¹⁷ Rather, they can be considered part of the Jewish tradition of summarising the Torah. The most famous example of this in extra-biblical tradition is from Hillel the Elder; 'What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbour; this is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary' (*b. Shabbat* 31a).⁴¹⁸ To say that such summaries were advocating an abandonment of the rest of the Torah is to misunderstand their purpose. These summaries were instead efforts to highlight or emphasise important aspects of the Law, and so Matthew's statements once again acknowledge the importance of love in adhering to the Law. As such, the summaries of the Law (7:12; 22:36-40) in Matthew do not override the Torah; instead they are hermeneutical principles through which to *interpret* the Torah.

A similar misinterpretation is sometimes found in 23:23 about Jesus' concern for the 'weightier' matters of the Law, and some have used this passage as another indication that the Matthean Jesus dismissed large parts of the Law.⁴¹⁹ This distinction between heavier, and by implication, lighter laws is not in the Lukan parallel (11:42), and so is likely a Matthean addition to the Q source.⁴²⁰ But classifying the laws of the Torah into such categories is not an attempt on Matthew's part to dismiss the lighter ones. Once again, this is a distinction also seen in extra-biblical Jewish literature,⁴²¹ and so, that Matthew was trying to set aside much of the Torah is again, most unlikely.⁴²² Instead, it is more likely that they reflect Matthew's system of

⁴¹⁵ See Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 256.

⁴¹⁶ Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 256.

⁴¹⁷ For the view that Matthew was intending to lessen the rest of the Law, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 425; T. L. Donaldson, 'The Law That Hangs (Matthew 22:40): Rabbinic Formulation and Matthean Social World,' *CBQ* 57 (1995), 689-709, 692. The following sample disagree, and argue that summaries of the Law were *not* meant to disregard the rest of the Law; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 689-90; Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 162-63; Senior, *Gospel of Matthew*, 253; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 127; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 184; Blanton IV, 'Saved by Obedience', 407-08.

⁴¹⁸ Other examples; *Sipra Lev.* §195 (on Lev. 19:1-4); §200 (on Lev. 19:15-20); *b. Ber.* 63a; *b. Mak.* 23b-24a; *m. Hag.* 1:8; *Exod. Rab.* 30:19 (on Exod. 21:21). See Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 689; Evans, *Matthew*, 385.

⁴¹⁹ D. E. Garland, *The Intention of Matthew 23* (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 139-40; Meier, *Matthew*, 270; R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1989), 194 n. 58.

⁴²⁰ Carlston and Evans, *Synagogue to Ecclesia*, 101.

⁴²¹ *b. Yoma* 83a-84b; *b. Sanh* 74a-b; *Pe'a* 4:19; *b. Yebamet* 47a; *m. Abot* 2:1; 4:2; *Hullin* 12.5; *Sifre Deut.* 79; *M. Abot* 2:1; 4:2. See Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 119-20.

⁴²² Agreed on by Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 690; W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew 19-28* (London: T&T Clark, 1997), 295; Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 162-63; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 131-32; ; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 73. For the opposite view, see U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, trans. J. B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 14-15.

interpretation of the Law when two laws clash; that in such scenarios, one should give preference to the weightier aspects of the Law (as Joseph did in Matt. 1:18-25). Sim puts it succinctly; ‘Where it is not possible to obey one law without breaking the other, then it is permissible to break the lesser commandment if such a breach results in the fulfilment of a more important demand of the law’.⁴²³ It is also important to note that the Matthean Jesus himself comments on these ‘lesser’ matters of the Law. In 23:23-24 Jesus criticises the Pharisees for their disordered priorities when it comes to the Law; ‘You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!’ He condemns them for neglecting the weightier matters of the Law, justice, mercy, and faith, but clarifies that; ‘these you ought to have done *without neglecting the others*’ (23:23). This is a key condition. The Matthean Jesus is here stating that the lighter aspects of the Law, in this instance tithing mint, dill, and cumin, should not be neglected. Jesus is thus clearly not dismissing the lighter aspects of the Law in favour of the heavier ones, instead he is highlighting that the Pharisees neglect the weightier laws, which are important to follow. The Matthean Jesus’ point is that both are important. So, once again, despite commentary to the contrary, 23:23 does not show the Matthean Jesus dismissing the Torah. Instead, it supports the idea that the Matthean community still practised the less weighty laws, as well as the weightier ones.⁴²⁴

For Matthew, not only does the Matthean Jesus advocate upholding the Law, but he is also the ultimate interpreter of the Law.⁴²⁵ Jesus’ references to love, mercy, and the golden rule are not intended as an overriding of the Torah – for Matthew they are not antithetical to the Law – rather they are the hermeneutical keys through which to interpret and uphold the Law. In contrast to Mark, the Matthean Jesus did not come to set aside the Torah, but to fulfil, authorise, and offer the correct interpretation of it. In his ministry, the Matthean Jesus provides the correct way to practise the entire Torah.

The importance of the Torah for Matthean theology is also reflected in the Gospel’s themes surrounding the divine judgement.⁴²⁶ Throughout the Matthean Gospel, there are consistent warnings of this impending judgement, often accompanied by denunciation of people’s behaviour, and encouragement to be obedient and righteous for the coming Kingdom of Heaven. This

⁴²³ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 137; see also Saldarini, *Matthew’s Community*, 50-51, 162.

⁴²⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 131.

⁴²⁵ A common position. See Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’; Bornkamm, ‘End-Expectation in Matthew’, 35; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 78-79; Allison, *New Moses*, 182-90; Saldarini, *Matthew’s Community*, 124-64; D. A. Hagner, ‘The Sitz Im Leben of the Gospel of Matthew’, in *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, ed. D. R. Bauer and M. A. Powell (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 27-68; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 123-39; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 264-66; Thachuparamban, *Mt 5,38-48*, 248; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 51-52; Blanton IV, ‘Saved by Obedience’.

⁴²⁶ On this topic, see especially Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 58-62; Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 137-272; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 53-172.

apocalyptic theme that runs through Matthew's Gospel is intricately related to its moral theology of the righteousness, obedience to the Law, and the will of God.⁴²⁷

From the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the judgement and consequences of it are said to be looming. In the baptism narrative, John the Baptist's warning to the crowd is to repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near (Matt. 3:2 cf. Mark 1:4). Jesus' role as judge is established at this early point, with John prophesying of Jesus; 'His winnowing fork is in his hand, he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire (3:12). John also warns the crowd of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who are coming for baptism, that the 'the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire' (3:10). These themes of judgement and bearing good fruit are therefore introduced early in Jesus' ministry and continue throughout the Gospel. Throughout his ministry, the Matthean Jesus often warns of the impending judgement,⁴²⁸ and Jesus' parables and teaching have the judgement as a running theme.⁴²⁹ All of this culminates in Matthew's eschatological discourse in chapters 24-25, where he tells a series of parables that call for watchfulness. The discourse ends with the crowning narrative of the divine judgement (25:31-46), where the Son of Man divides the righteous from the unrighteous, and sends the former to eternal life, and the latter to eternal punishment.⁴³⁰ Judgement is even evident in Matthew's particular vocabulary. G. Barth, in his classic essay on Matthew and the Law, pointed out that Matthew's choice of words reflects a considerable focus on warning and judgement, especially in comparison with the other synoptic Gospels.⁴³¹ Exclusively Matthean passages also emphasise this subject,⁴³² as well as Matthean additions to Q.⁴³³

The criteria for this upcoming judgement are repeatedly referred to in the Matthean narrative. The evangelist talks about God's will (θέλημα) in relation to the Kingdom of God and judgement (6:10; 7:21; 21:31), he repeatedly refers to righteousness throughout his Gospel as a

⁴²⁷ As well as those listed above see Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 17-19; D. C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73-175; Chester, 'Messianism, Torah and Early Christian Tradition', 321-22; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 130-31; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 254-60; Blanton IV, 'Saved by Obedience', 405.

⁴²⁸ 7:21-23; 10:7, 15, 23; 11:20-24; 12:36-37; 16:27; 24-25.

⁴²⁹ 13:24-30, 36-43; 24:45-51; 25:1-13; 25:14-30.

⁴³⁰ After this story, the Gospel gives way to the passion narrative. Even the Kingdom of Heaven is not mentioned past Matt. 25.

⁴³¹ Κρίσις (judgement) 5:21, 22; 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:18, 20, 36, 41, 42; 23:23, 33 (Matthew 12 times, Mark 1, Luke 4); ἡμέρα κρίσεως (day of judgement) 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36 (Matthew 4 times, Mark 0, Luke 0); μισθός (reward) 5:12, 46; 6:1, 2, 5, 16; 10:41 (twice), 42; 20:8 (Matthew 10 times, Mark 1, Luke 3); εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον (the outer darkness) 8:12; 22:13; 25:30; ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων (there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth) 8:12 (cf. Luke 13:28); 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30. See Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 58.

⁴³² 3:10 cf. 7:19; 5:29 cf. 18:8; 7:16 cf. 12:33; 10:15 cf. 11:24; 19:30 cf. 20:16; 24:42 cf. 25:13. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 59.

⁴³³ 7:13-14; 8:12; 10:15; 11:20; 12:36; 21:28-32. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 60.

criterion for judgement and a condition for entering the Kingdom of Heaven,⁴³⁴ and he also has a preference for language about obedience.⁴³⁵ The motif of knowing people by their fruits and actions is also consistent,⁴³⁶ as well as the overall idea that judgement is based on one's actions and intentions.⁴³⁷ Matthew emphasises the need for repentance (μετανοέω),⁴³⁸ and there is a recurring theme of people receiving their due (μισθός).⁴³⁹ As an example, the Sermon on the Mount details the expectations for the Kingdom of Heaven; it is a call to do God's will (6:10; 7:21) and be righteous (5:6, 10, 20, 45; 6:25, 33), with consistent themes of following the Law (5:17-19; 7:12, 21-23), and warning that people are to be judged by their fruits (7:16-20) and their works (5:16; 6:1-4).

Particularly notable for this discussion is that the Law is also closely tied up with these criteria for the upcoming judgement.⁴⁴⁰ As was seen earlier, Matt. 5:17-19 is closely related to the judgement; 5:19; 'Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven'. A more explicit link could hardly be made. Here, Matthew has drawn a direct connection between obeying the entire Torah, and standing in the Kingdom of Heaven. 5:17-19 as a whole draws other connections with the theme of judgement; that the entire Law will remain valid 'until heaven and earth pass away' (5:18), and in the immediately following passage that 'unless your *righteousness* exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven'. The relationship between the Law and judgement is later spelled out again in the query of the rich young man (19:16-22); he asks Jesus what he must do to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and Jesus says that he must follow the commandments (19:23-30). For Matthew, righteousness, obedience, and adhering to the will of God, inevitably involve keeping God's Law.⁴⁴¹

And finally, the principles of mercy and love are seen (though not named) in the criteria for the last judgement (25:31-46). The Son of Man tells the righteous (δίκαιος);

⁴³⁴ 5:20; 5:44-45; 6:33; 13:43, 49-50; 25:37, 46. The Pharisees are condemned for their lack of righteousness (23:28-29, 35), and in the infancy narrative, Joseph is described as a righteous man (1:19)

⁴³⁵ Notably; ποιήσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς (does the will of my Father) 12:50 cf. Mark 3:35; Matthew 7:21; 21:31; δικαιοσύνη (righteousness) 3:15; 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33; 21:32 (Matthew 7 times, Luke 1); κελεύω (command) 8:18; 14:9, 19, 28; 18:25; 27:58, 64 (Matthew 7 times, Luke 1); τηρέω (watch over) 19:17; 23:3; 27:36, 54; 28:4, 20 (Matthew 6 times, Mark 1, Luke 0); ἀνομία (lawlessness) 7:23; 13:41; 23:28; 24:12 (Matthew 4 times, Mark 0, Luke 0); ὑποκριτής (hypocrites); 6:2, 5, 16; 7:51 15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29; 24:51 (Matthew 13 times, Mark 1, Luke 0). Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 58.

⁴³⁶ 3:8, 10; 7:16-20; 12:33; 13:23; 21:43.

⁴³⁷ 5:16; 12:36-37; 16:27; 24:51; 25:14-30; also 10:14-15; 11:21-22.

⁴³⁸ 3:2; 4:17; 11:20, 21; 12:41

⁴³⁹ 5:12, 46; 6:1, 2, 5, 16; 10:41, 42.

⁴⁴⁰ See also Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 163-72.

⁴⁴¹ Blanton IV, 'Saved by Obedience', 403.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me’.

At the end of the ages, when all is decided, and the sheep separated from the goats, mercy, love, and righteousness are the criteria upon which one’s fate will ultimately be decided.⁴⁴²

Matthew’s interconnected themes of the Law, righteousness, obedience, God’s will, works, reward, and knowing people by their fruits are all a part of Matthew’s overall eschatological theology. This over-arching theme of judgement in Matthew is thus fundamentally tied in with the Torah.⁴⁴³ The Torah is a fundamental criterion for the judgement, and as such it is an essential part of the moral framework for the Matthean community.

3.1.1 Matthean Amendments to Mark

For this discussion, it is pertinent to look at Matthew’s use of Mark in the context of their views on the Law. Matthew has notably adjusted many of Mark’s stories on the subject. Matthew may have wanted to use most of Mark and retain his stories, but he consistently saw the need to qualify material that related to the Law and to add details or clarifications that would lessen the implications of the Markan Jesus’ words.⁴⁴⁴ While Matthew retains some Markan stories that (in the Markan context) downplay the Law, in Matthew’s new context, and with his amendments, the same stories are not intended as threats to the significance of the Torah. As a result, passages in Mark that were written to be liberal on the Law have been transformed and do not convey the same meaning in Matthew.

Matthew’s re-telling of Jesus’ debate with the Pharisees about hand washing is one of the most telling examples of Matthean rewriting about the Law (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23);

Mark 7:1-23	Matt. 15:1-20
¹ Now when the Pharisees gathered together to him, with some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem	¹ Then the Pharisees and the scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem
² they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless	

⁴⁴² For similar ideas see also 6:1-2; 12:1-14; 18:12-14, 15-20; 21-22.

⁴⁴³ It is also important to note that the principle of mercy is consistently used in direct relation to the judgement theme (esp. 25:31-46, but also 18:23-35; 19:16-22). Once again, condemnation is the fate of those who practice the Law fully but without the correct attitude.

⁴⁴⁴ On this point, J. A. Doole argues that this Matthean use of Mark demonstrates how Matthew is more willing to qualify Markan sayings he disagrees with rather than abandon them altogether, thus demonstrating his loyalty to the Markan text. Doole, *What Was Mark for Matthew?*, 44.

they wash their hands, observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴ and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they purify themselves; and there are many other traditions which they observe, the washing of cups and pots and vessels of bronze).	
⁵ And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders but eat with hands defiled?’	and said, ² ‘Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.
⁶ And he said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of your hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.” ⁸ You leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men’. ⁹ And he said to them, ‘You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God, in order to keep your tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said, “Honour your father and your mother”; and “He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die”; ¹¹ but you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is Corban’ (that is, given to God) – ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, ¹³ thus making void the word of God through your tradition which you hand on. And many such things you do’.	³ He answered them, ‘And why do you transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴ For God commanded, “Honour your father and your mother”, and “He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die”. ⁵ But you say, “If anyone tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is given to God, he need not honour his father. ⁶ So for the sake of your tradition, you have made void the word of God. ⁷ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: ⁸ “This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁹ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men”’.
¹⁴ And he called the people to him again, and said to them, ‘Hear me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him’.	¹⁰ And he called the people to him and said to them, ‘Hear and understand: ¹¹ not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man’.
¹⁷ And when he had entered the house, and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable	¹² Then the disciples came and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?
	¹³ He answered, ‘Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit’. ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, ‘Explain the parable to us’
¹⁸ And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ since it enters not his heart but his stomach and so passes on?”	¹⁶ And he said, ‘Are you still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and so passes on?
purifying all foods (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα).	
²⁰ And he said, ‘What comes out of a man is what defiles a man. ²¹ For from within, out of	¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man. ¹⁹ For out

the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, ²² coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man.	of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a man;
	but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.

Comparatively, the two stories seem quite similar, but while Matthew has remained loyal to much of his source, his small adjustments to the passage manage to change the entire meaning of the story. The Markan version of the story begins with Jesus arguing with the Pharisees about hand washing (7:1-13), and then the Markan Jesus stops interacting with the Pharisees, and instead turns to a crowd (7:14). In this part of the story, Mark changes the topic from hand washing to general food laws, as evident by Mark's comment in 7:19b. Mark's version of the story, then, is firstly about the Pharisaic tradition of hand washing, but then changes to the topic of food laws in the Torah, which Mark effectively dismisses with his comments in 7:15 and 7:19b. Matthew's version of the story looks similar for most of the discussion, but he has subtly completely changed the message of the pericope. In explicitly naming the topic of the discussion as still being about hand washing at the end of the story (15:20), Matthew has ensured that the topic of the debate has not changed, and that all of Jesus' comments are only directed at the Pharisaic tradition of hand washing – in itself an oral tradition of the Pharisees, not a Law of the Torah.⁴⁴⁵ For Matthew, then, the entire story is about Jesus arguing with the Pharisees about their tradition of hand washing, and at no point does the topic of general food laws come into the discussion. To add to this impression, the audience and setting does not change in Matthew as they did in Mark (Mark 7:17),⁴⁴⁶ instead in Matthew the encounter continues to be only with the Pharisees, which he points out by explicitly bringing them up again in 15:12, after Jesus' statement about things that defile.⁴⁴⁷ In ending the conversation with Jesus referring to the original topic of hand washing (15:20), Matthew ensures that the entire discussion, including the reference to 'what goes in does not defile' (15:11) is only about the Pharisaic tradition, not about wider Jewish food laws. This has the effect of reducing the

⁴⁴⁵ A conclusion reached also by Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 160-61; Snodgrass, 'Matthew's Understanding', 375; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 163-66, 183, 344; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 211-12; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 41; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul, 2014', 48; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 69. Not all agree. J. G. Crossley has argued that Matthew understood Mark 7:19 correctly; Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 14. D. A. Hagner points out that Matthew still keeps some of Mark's controversial comments (Matt. 7:11/Mark 15:15). Hagner, 'Sitz Im Leben', 54. D. R. A. Hare writes that the omission of Mark 7:19b is exaggerated by scholars, and that the impact of the passage is the same without it. Matthew, he writes, even draws attention to the Pharisees' shock at this announcement. Hare, 'How Jewish', 273.

⁴⁴⁶ D. C. Sim writes that this was also done to make sure that Jesus' words *only* offended the Pharisees – thus aiding the overall picture as this as a dispute with only the Pharisees (and their interpretation of the Law) and not Judaism more broadly. See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 143.

⁴⁴⁷ Matthew has also modified Mark 7:14, where 'the things which come out of a man are what defile' has been clarified. Matthew adds 'what comes out *of the mouth*, this defiles a man' thus taking away the Markan implication that 'what comes out' generally i.e. waste.

topic to being about the traditions only of the Pharisees, not of all the Jews and redirects Jesus' criticism from Jewish food laws to Pharisaic hand washing.⁴⁴⁸ Tellingly, Matthew has eliminated Mark's conclusion that Jesus declared all foods clean (7:19b), arguably Mark's most definitive statement on the Torah in his Gospel. As Sim points out, if Matthew had believed that Jesus had actually purified all foods then he surely would have kept Mark's editorial conclusion to the episode. Instead he left it out, and thus it is a reasonable conclusion that Matthew did *not* see his newly edited story as disregarding any food laws.⁴⁴⁹ With his amendments, Matthew has taken what was a passage that nullified Jewish food laws, and has reformed it so that it is yet another criticism of the Pharisees. Due to the conscious amendments to Mark, in Matthew's Gospel the food laws of the Torah remain intact.

Matthew has similarly made small changes to the Sabbath controversies in Mark; keeping most of the text, but with finely made adjustments that take away Jesus' toning down of the Sabbath law. The first Sabbath controversy in Matthew does not so easily dismiss the Law as Mark, but once again shows Jesus to be the superior interpreter of the Law while upholding the validity of it.⁴⁵⁰

Mark 2:23-28	Matt. 12:1-8
²³ One Sabbath, he was going through the grain fields, and as they made their way	¹ At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath;
his disciples began to pluck heads of grain	his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.
²⁴ And the Pharisees said to him, 'Look why are they doing what is not permitted (ἐξέσθιν) on the Sabbath?'	² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, 'Look, your disciples are doing what is not permitted (ἐξέσθιν) to do on the Sabbath'.
²⁵ And he said to them, 'Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him; ²⁶ how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not permitted for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?'	³ He said to them, 'Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him; ⁴ how they entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?'
	⁵ Or have you not read in the law (ἐν τῷ νόμῳ) how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? ⁶ I tell you, something greater than the Temple is here. ⁷ And if you had known what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice", you would not have condemned the guiltless.
²⁷ And he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath;	
²⁸ so the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.	⁸ For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath'.

⁴⁴⁸ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 132; Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 174.

⁴⁴⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 134.

⁴⁵⁰ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 138.

In this pericope, Matthew adds that the disciples were hungry (12:1). This single detail has several implications; that the disciples were in need, that they were not unnecessarily disregarding the Sabbath, that it provides a setting for Matthew's mercy hermeneutic to come into practice, referenced in this story by the Hosea passage (12:7),⁴⁵¹ and finally that their hunger forms a stronger parallel with the David story Jesus later tells (12:3). But Mark's example of David is not related to the Sabbath, but instead is about the eating of forbidden bread, a mistake which Matthew is likely to have picked up on.⁴⁵² So on top of this example, Matthew adds an additional example from Jewish tradition; the example of priests in the temple on the Sabbath, who, though they worked on the Sabbath, *were not guilty of breaching the Sabbath*. Twice, the Matthean Jesus emphasises that these priests were guiltless in their actions (12:5, 7). B. Repschinski suggests that by referring to this example, Matthew makes sure that the topic up for debate is not the Sabbath Law itself, but implications of the practice of the Law. Matthew's adjustments to Mark thus reflect a changing of focus from questions about the importance of the Sabbath in Mark, to Jesus' authority as an interpreter of the Law.⁴⁵³ With this example, Matthew assures his audience that Jesus here is engaging in an argument about the implications of the Law, not questioning the Law itself.⁴⁵⁴ In this interaction, then, Matthew's Jesus takes ownership of interpretation of the Law, and this is seen at every step; the Pharisees in Matthew have not read the story of David (12:3), have not read the Law (12:5), and have not read Hosea (12:7). The Pharisees then do not know the Law, but Jesus does.⁴⁵⁵ This first Sabbath controversy therefore is not an issue of the importance of the Sabbath (as it was in Mark), but about Jesus' authority over the Pharisees to interpret the Scriptures.⁴⁵⁶ Matthew emphasises Jesus' authority by showing that he is a superior interpreter on the Law.⁴⁵⁷ Finally, Matthew eliminates Mark's statement that the Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27), again, lessening the disregard of the Sabbath that Mark's version of the story carries. Once again, Matthew's seemingly small adjustments to Mark have a huge impact on the meaning of the narrative. The story is not one about the disciples transgressing the Sabbath, but about Jesus' superiority in knowing and interpreting the Law.

Matthew's adjustments to the second Sabbath controversy (12:9-14 cf. Mark 3:1-6) are less drastic. Here, Jesus heals a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, while the Pharisees look on, ready to call him out on his actions. Rather than only watching on as in Mark's account (Mark 3:2), Matthew has the Pharisees directly ask Jesus about whether it is permitted (ἐξέσται) to heal on

⁴⁵¹ Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 128-29.

⁴⁵² Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 97-98.

⁴⁵³ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 99.

⁴⁵⁴ In this explanation, Matthew also uses the Law (ὁ νόμος) to justify the actions of the disciples (12:5).

⁴⁵⁵ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 101.

⁴⁵⁶ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 102.

⁴⁵⁷ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 106.

the Sabbath, again making this dispute clearly about adherence to the Law.⁴⁵⁸ Matthew has reduced some of the detail in Mark's account, and added an example of a sheep that falls into a pit to further Jesus' justification, but otherwise the changes are minimal; because Mark's story fits in with Matthew's principle of mercy in application of the Law. Thus, the story is another example of interpreting the Sabbath through a legal principle.⁴⁵⁹

Another significant editing job by Matthew is done on his version of the story of the greatest commandment (22:34-40 cf. Mark 12:28-34);

Mark 12:28-34	Matt. 22:34-40
	³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they came together
²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him,	³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, to test him.
'Which commandment is the first of all?'	³⁶ 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?'
²⁹ Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; ³⁰ and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength'	³⁷ And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment.
³¹ The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself". There is no other commandment greater than these".	³⁹ And the second is like it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets'.
³² And the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that he is one, and there is no other but he; ³³ and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices'.	
³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God'.	
And after that no one dared to ask him any question.	

In Mark, a scribe asks Jesus about the greatest commandment, to which Jesus responds by citing the two greatest commandments. In response the scribe in Mark proclaimed that Jesus was right, and that to love one's neighbour was 'much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices' (12:33), a response which the Markan Jesus affirms by saying that the scribe is not far from the Kingdom of God (12:34). Matthew again makes significant changes; the set-up and conclusion for the story has been adjusted to provide a different tone and message of the story. In Matthew, the

⁴⁵⁸ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 107-08.

⁴⁵⁹ Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 111.

initial question is put forward by a Pharisee, automatically making the scene one of tension. In his response to the question, Matthew has added that on these two greatest commandments ‘depend all Law and the prophets’, a familiar Matthean motif. But the most significant omission is the man’s response to Jesus’ teaching (Mark 12:32-33). Matthew, too, has eliminated Jesus’ affirmation of the man’s reply (Mark 12:34 cf. Luke 10:28). Matthew has thus eliminated any Markan interpretation of the two greatest commandments as in any way dismissing other aspects of the Torah. Matthew ends his story on the comment that the Law and the prophets depend on the two commandments. Matthew has thus adjusted the ending of the story so that the entire episode presents more like a conflict story than Mark’s version.⁴⁶⁰ Matthew has thus transformed a Markan story where the Torah is downplayed into yet another conflict with the Pharisees

There are other examples of Matthean adjustment to Mark that display a commitment to the Torah. Matthew’s addition to the saying about new and old wineskins that *both* the new and old are preserved (as opposed to just the new) could suggest a respect for the Law (Matt. 9:17 cf. Mark 2:22).⁴⁶¹ In Jesus’ words on divorce and celibacy (Matt. 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12), Matthew omits Mark 10:3 (‘What did Moses command you?’), thus lessening any perceived contradiction between Jesus’ teaching and Moses’ teaching.⁴⁶² Also in this story, Matthew has added whether a man can divorce his wife *for cause* (κατὰ πᾶσαν αἰτίαν), which makes the question not about the Law itself, but about interpretation of the Law.⁴⁶³ Matthean ideas can also be seen in the story of the rich young man who approaches Jesus and asks how to inherit eternal life (Matt. 19:16-22 cf. Mark 10:17-22); Matthew adds to the Markan Jesus’ response that the young man must ‘keep the commandments’ if he wants to enter life (19:17), also adding the golden rule to the list of commandments (19:19). Matthew also adds to Mark’s warning about the desolating sacrilege that not only should people pray that it does not happen in winter (Mark 13:18), but also that it does not happen on the Sabbath (Matt. 24:20), demonstrating a concern for Sabbath observance.

In sum, analysis of the first Gospel demonstrates that the Matthean community saw themselves as upholding the entire Law, saw Jesus as the ultimate authority on interpreting the Law, and saw the Law as an integral part of their overall moral and consequently apocalyptic theology. For Matthew, the Law was not merely an ancient tradition, but a current issue that constantly came up in arguments with the Pharisees and that was being fulfilled in Jesus’

⁴⁶⁰ Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 235.

⁴⁶¹ J. F. Mali writes that Matthew’s addition to these verses demonstrates his focus on tradition. His adaption, ‘overturns the thrust of Mark 2:21-22’ J. F. Mali, *The Christian Gospel and Its Jewish Roots: A Redaction-Critical Study of Mark 2:21-22 in Context* (New York: Lang, 2009), 155.

⁴⁶² Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 225.

⁴⁶³ So Segal, ‘Studying Judaism’, 281.

ministry.⁴⁶⁴ As such, Matthew is more conservative on the issue of the Law than was Mark, and he has adapted and adjusted his source in order to fit in with his more conservative view.

3.2 *The Law-abiding Gentile mission in Matthew*

The previous chapter demonstrated that the Markan Jesus made active and consistent efforts to take his ministry to the Gentiles. Matthew's relationship to Gentiles and the Gentile mission, however, is markedly different. There has been a lot of debate in scholarship about Matthew's relationship to the Gentile world, and arguing whether Matthew had a positive or negative view towards Gentiles. Part of what makes this topic popular for study are the seemingly contradictory opinions that evangelist himself writes on the subject. Matthew's relationship to the Gentiles can best be summarised as complicated. On the one hand there are several indications throughout the Gospel that the Matthean community did not feel positively towards Gentiles generally; they are used as exemplary of bad behaviour (5:47; 6:7-8; 31-33; 18:17; 20:25-26), and they are also named as perpetrators of persecution to the Matthean community (20:19; 24:9). At the same time, Matthew contrasts them favourably against Israel (8:8-13; 21:43; 22:7-9).⁴⁶⁵ It is thus difficult to try and form a coherent understanding of the first evangelist and the Gentiles.⁴⁶⁶

Matthew's position on the Gentile *mission* is more consistent. The Matthean Jesus promotes a Jews-only mission during his ministry (10:5-7;⁴⁶⁷ 15:24; also 7:6 cf. 13:45-46),⁴⁶⁸ and

⁴⁶⁴ B. Repschinski, 'Conclusions', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. D. C. Sim and B. Repschinski (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 173-76, 174.

⁴⁶⁵ A. Runesson also points out that the Gentile characters in the Gospel are also heavily criticised. Pilate, representing the Romans, is portrayed in Matthew as nothing but a tool for the Hebrew God; the Romans are thus represented as powerless. Further, Gentile soldiers torture and mock Jesus before his crucifixion, and after his resurrection they accept bribes to allow false rumours to spread. Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 353-55. A. J. Saldarini notes that comparing Israel's lack of faith to the more positive Gentiles is 'commonplace in the tradition and similar to the prophetic rebukes and threats against Israel in the Bible'. Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 71.

⁴⁶⁶ D. C. Sim has analysed Matthew's portrayal of Gentiles in the context of the Gentile persecution of Jews in Antioch during and after the Jewish War and whether and how this affected Matthew's attitude to the Gentile world (*Ant.* 2:479; *JW* 7:46-62). See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 231-36. So, too, has he studied Matthew's relationship with Formative Judaism, and whether this would have driven the Matthean community to be more positive about its associations with Gentiles. He argues that the suggestion that conflict with Formative Judaism would have pushed Matthew towards the Gentile world is unlikely. The Matthean community had been just as persecuted by the Gentiles. Instead, Matthew would have become isolated from both the Jewish and Gentile worlds. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 215-55.

⁴⁶⁷ The direction to go nowhere among the Gentiles is not in Mark or Luke, even though they too contain the commissioning of the disciples (Mark 3:13-19; 6:8-11; Luke 6:12-16; 9:2-5)

⁴⁶⁸ Sim and W. Loader have also pointed to Matt. 1:21: 'He will save his people (λαός) from their sins'. Sim highlights that the evangelist only uses λαός in reference to the Jews. See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 250; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 155. D. C. Sim also points to Matt. 10:23 as a demonstration that the Jewish mission was to continue to the parousia. He also cites Matthew's omission of the return of the Twelve in Mark (6:30) as having the broader implication that the restricted mission to Israel never ended. See Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 158.

he does not perform miracles in Gentile cities (actively omitting Mark's references to these; Mark 3:8/Luke 6:17; Mark 5:20; 6:45; 7:31). But Matthew also foretells the bringing of the gospel to the Gentiles (8:11; 12:18-21; 20:1-16; 21:43; 24:14),⁴⁶⁹ and by the Gospel's end, explicitly commissions a Gentile mission (28:16-20).⁴⁷⁰ Despite whatever he may have said and done before, he is now advocating a mission to all nations;

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to keep (τηρέω) everything that I have commanded you.

This commission is in an important place in Matthew's Gospel, and it has been put in the words of the resurrected Jesus. More authority for the Gentile mission could hardly have been applied.⁴⁷¹ As such, it is explicitly clear that the Matthean Jesus is advocating a mission to the Gentiles. It is easy for these issues of Gentiles and the consistency of the Gentile mission to take up the entire discussion, but they are not strictly relevant to the larger topic. What is important here is how Matthew understands this mission.

Some have taken this passage to mean that Matthew was initiating a new mission that was meant *exclusively* for Gentiles, and that the mission to the Jews was thus ended.⁴⁷² This argument goes that Matthew was here signalling a final rejection of Israel, and was now turning to a brand new Gentile vision for the gospel. The rejection of Israel is arguably hinted at in Matthew (8:12; 21:43; 22:4-7), and sometimes this has been read in accompaniment with 28:16-20. But the modern scholarly consensus is that in 28:16-20, Matthew means to refer to all nations, thus meaning *both*

⁴⁶⁹ Other less obvious and more contentious examples include the inclusion of Gentiles in the genealogy (1:2-16), the story of the Magi (2:1-12), the Gentile followers of Jesus (4:23-26), the centurion's servant (8:5-13), the presumption that the disciples will actually venture into Gentile lands (10:18), the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter (15:21-28), the foretelling of the Temple's destruction as a rejection of Israel (24:3), and the centurion's confession of faith at the cross (27:54)

⁴⁷⁰ This distinction between the pre-resurrection and post-resurrection ideas of the Matthean Jesus is not always recognised, and there has been much debate over whether the Matthean Jesus was for or against a mission to the Gentiles. Some propose that Matthew wanted and anticipated a Gentile mission throughout his Gospel; D. Senior, 'Between Two Worlds: Gentiles and Jewish Christians in Matthew's Gospel,' *CBQ* 61 (1999), 1-23; Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 252; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 50; J. D. G. Dunn, 'Matthew – a Jewish Gospel for Jews and Gentiles', in *Matthew and Mark across Perspectives: Essays in Honour of Stephen C. Barton and William R. Telford*, ed. K. A. Bendoraitis and N. K. Gupta (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 125-42. Some say that this decision is seen in Matthew as a post-resurrection idea; Meier, *Matthew*, 367; Harrington, *Matthew*, 416; Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 139-40; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, esp. 191, 195; E. K. Broadhead, 'Crossroads and Communities within the Gospel of Matthew', in *The Gospel of Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity*, ed. D. Senior (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011), 421-35, 425.

⁴⁷¹ Interestingly, W. C. Allen suggests that 28:16-20 was part of Mark's lost ending. Allen, *Matthew*, lxvii.

⁴⁷² Clark, 'Gentile Bias', 165-72; D. R. A. Hare and D. J. Harrington, "'Make Disciples of All the Gentiles" (Mt 28:19),' *CBQ* 37 (1975), 359-69; Zetterholm, 'Historical Developments in Antioch', 90.

Gentiles and Jews.⁴⁷³ Another view of the great commission is that it signals a new path, and a new and additional mission, that was necessarily different from the one Matthew had previously been advocating.⁴⁷⁴ Under this view, Matthew was promoting two distinct missions; one for Jews previously and now a new one for Gentiles, with possibly different rules. There is possibly some Pauline influence in this reading of Matthew (Gal. 2:7-9), but such a dual mission is not in Matthew at all. That he has alluded to a Gentile mission throughout the Gospel (24:14) means that the development in 28:16-20 is not a new idea, but one that was always a part of the plan.⁴⁷⁵ This is seen throughout the gospel when all nations are subject to the upcoming judgement (11:22; 24:30; 25:32). The great commission in Matthew, then, is one that advocates a single universal mission for all.

The key question is then, *on what terms* was this mission to be conducted? Did Matthew advocate a Law-free Gentile mission, as seen in Mark?⁴⁷⁶ Or did Matthew expect Gentile converts to abide by the Torah?⁴⁷⁷ There is not explicit statement from the risen Matthean Jesus about the Law in this final commission, and so in order to answer the question faithfully to the Gospel, answers must be found elsewhere.

When the final commission is seen through the framework of the Gospel itself, a suddenly Law-free theology is hard to explain. In light of Matthew's complete commitment to the Torah throughout his Gospel, nothing in 28:16-20, or the events that preceded it, warrants setting aside of the Torah. The strongest argument, then, for a Law-abiding Gentile mission in Matthew is the argument of continuity. No part of the post-resurrection narrative signals that there was a sudden drastic change of theology in the final stages of the narrative. Contrary to this, J. P. Meier has argued that Jesus' death and resurrection were the apocalyptic turning point, and so argues that the reference to the world passing away in 5:18 was intended as a time when the Law did pass away.⁴⁷⁸ But, as was covered earlier, this would mean that Jesus indeed *did* come to abolish the Torah, which is contrary to the firm statement in 5:17 that he had specifically not come to do this. Given

⁴⁷³ So J. P. Meier, 'Nations or Gentiles in Matthew 28:19?', *CBQ* 39 (1977), 94-102; Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 193-239; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 243. Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 241.

⁴⁷⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 493.

⁴⁷⁵ Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 190; Repschinski, 'Matthew and Luke', 51-57; Dunn, 'A Jewish Gospel for Jews and Gentiles', 139-42.

⁴⁷⁶ Meier, *Law and History*, 61, 64; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 493.s

⁴⁷⁷ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 44-45; Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 183-85; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 243-47; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 252-54; Repschinski, 'Matthew and Luke', 56-57; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 31-38, 379-81. P. Foster says such a firm conclusion is uncertain. P. Foster, 'Paul and Matthew: Two Strands of the Early Jesus Movement with Little Sign of Connection', in *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts Convergences*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Willits (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 86-114, 110.

⁴⁷⁸ Meier, *Law and History*, 30-35.

that 5:17-19 did not foresee the Law becoming redundant after Jesus' death and resurrection, the sentiments in 5:17-19 instead emphasise the absolute enduring relevance of the Law. Given such strong statements as these, why would Matthew *not* expect Gentiles to follow the Torah? Matt. 5:17-19 was an explicit instruction to keep the entire Torah for eternity, and these ideas are never retracted, lessened, or overruled in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus' disciples were repeatedly taught to follow the Law in a superior manner than the Pharisees (e.g. Matt. 5:20; 15:6), and suddenly discounting the Law or any part of this teaching is unwarranted.⁴⁷⁹ With this constant advocacy of keeping and follow the Law appropriately, it is very improbable that such a fundamental part of the Matthean theology would suddenly, and only implicitly, be eradicated in the final sentences of the entire Gospel. Matt. 28:16-20 does not signal a new theology that is different to what has been taught up to now; it contains nothing that signifies that these new participants in the Kingdom are to be given different criteria. In fact, Matthew indicates at several points in his Gospel that *all* peoples will be subject to the same judgement (11:22; 24:30; 25:32).⁴⁸⁰ As such, the final commission does not initiate a new or different gospel, but only expands the audience for what the Matthean Jesus has been teaching all along. Matthew thus promotes a Law-abiding Gentile mission.

A further argument in favour of this continuity between the Law-abiding teaching in Matthew's Gospel and the final commission is Jesus' command to the disciples to teach others to keep (τηρέω) all that he has commanded them (28:20).⁴⁸¹ Here, Jesus himself reinforces the continuing validity of his ministry's teaching.⁴⁸² The content of Jesus' teaching has been vast over the Gospel of Matthew, but how to correctly interpret the Law had been a recurring and consistent element of his ministry. It is then very unlikely that this entire aspect of Jesus' teaching would suddenly – and only implicitly – be eradicated in the final sentence of the Gospel. Advocating a

⁴⁷⁹ Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 35.

⁴⁸⁰ Runesson has suggested that Matthew's use of ἅνθρωπος in 5:19 could indicate that Matthew anticipated the Torah to eventually apply more widely than just the Jewish people addressed in 5:17-19. A. Runesson, 'Judging Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew: Between "Othering" and Inclusion', in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Professor Graham N. Stanton*, ed. D. M. Gurtner, J. Willits, and R. A. Burridge (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 133-51, 146, n. 41. Similarly, B. L. White has pointed out that Jesus is addressing a crowd, including people from the Decapolis, in his Sermon on the Mount (4:25). White, '(Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul', 355.

⁴⁸¹ That Jesus' command to observe all he had been teaching includes observance of the Torah; Senior, 'Between Two Worlds', 20; B. Byrne, *Lifting the Burden: Reading Matthew's Gospel in the Church Today* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004), 228; Murphy, 'Jewishness', 383. Some have pointed out that Matthew's language in 28:20, to keep (τηρέω) all that had been taught, is reflective of a legal understanding. See Carlston and Evans, *Synagogue to Ecclesia*, 288. Cf. R. H. Gundry, who suggests that Jesus said to observe *his* commandments, 'which interpret the Old Testament law, not to keep the law as interpreted by him'. Gundry, *Old Is Better*, 113.

⁴⁸² Not all see this as an affirmation of a Law-abiding Gospel. C. M. Tuckett argues that the disciples are instructed to go and teach everything Jesus has taught them. They are not instructed to observe the Mosaic Law. The fundamental basis of the great commission is not the teaching of Moses, but the teaching of Jesus. See Tuckett, 'Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?', 127.

Law-free gospel at this final moment, would nullify all the teaching on the Law and its criteria for judgement that preceded it.⁴⁸³ The divine judgement, about which all apocalyptic discussion was warning, had still not occurred by the end of the Gospel, and so the criteria for this judgement, being righteous and doing the will of God as defined by the Law, and as interpreted by Jesus, was still required. Further, Matthew's use of the word *τηρέω* has considerable implications for this question at hand as the term is used especially in relation to keeping the Law.⁴⁸⁴

In arguments for a Law-free mission in Matthew, Jesus' command to baptise new disciples is sometimes taken as the only criterion for the universal mission.⁴⁸⁵ But such a reading seems more inspired by later history and Christian tradition than the Matthean text itself. That the Matthean Jesus signalled baptism as a part of the evangelising mission is undeniable. As such it obviously held some importance for Matthew's community.⁴⁸⁶ To then go on to say that this replaced everything that had gone before is unwarranted. Nothing in Matthew suggests that baptism replaces the Law.⁴⁸⁷ For evidence of this there is no need look further than the Matthean text itself. In the narrative of John the Baptist's own ministry, nothing is ever implied that his rite of baptism nullified Torah. He practiced baptism without negating circumcision.⁴⁸⁸ The message that accompanied baptism was one of repentance in preparation for the coming Kingdom, as such the actual rite of baptism was only associated with the confession of sins (3:6), and not a replacement of circumcision. When the Pharisees approach John the Baptist, he tells them to not presume that just because they are children of Abraham that they will be saved (3:9), but they that need to 'bear fruit worthy of repentance' (3:8), highlighting that the criteria for the judgement were still relevant.⁴⁸⁹ The clearest example, however, comes from Jesus himself, who was baptised (3:13-16), and then went on to continue preaching a gospel framed by the Torah. So even though Matthew never explicitly says that baptism and the Law are not mutually exclusive, the evidence from the narrative indicates that baptism was not automatically intended as a replacement of the Torah. That Matthew names baptism but not the Law does not automatically mean that one was required and the other not; while Matthew may not have needed to cite the Law, baptism, on the other hand, did need to be explicitly outlined because it was new, and had not been prescribed in

⁴⁸³ Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 34.

⁴⁸⁴ See Matt. 23:3; also Josephus *Ant.* 8:120; Sir. 29:1.

⁴⁸⁵ Meier, 'Antioch', 41, 62; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 492-93; Tuckett, 'Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?', 127.

⁴⁸⁶ So too Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 157.

⁴⁸⁷ Runesson writes that being a disciple of Christ had two markers; being Jewish (implying circumcision), and following Jesus (implying baptism). Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 35.

⁴⁸⁸ Murphy, 'Jewishness', 383.

⁴⁸⁹ John the Baptist's appearance in the narrative in the story about his own death involves his imprisonment for telling Herod that his marriage was unlawful (οὐκ ἔξεστίν). Despite his ministry's focus on baptism, John continued to live within Judaism and abide by the Law.

the narrative up to now.⁴⁹⁰

Debate in this area often takes the form of arguing whether or not Matthew intended Gentile converts to be circumcised.⁴⁹¹ This was obviously a major issue for Paul and the Jerusalem Council but neither Mark nor Matthew brings it up explicitly.⁴⁹² But because the topic was important only a few decades before Matthew was written, it is still significant to this discussion. Matthew's Gospel is silent on the issue of circumcision. Drawing a conclusion from an absence of evidence is uncertain terrain, and many solutions have been offered. A. J. Saldarini suggests that Matthew's silence on the issue means circumcision was not a controversial issue for him,⁴⁹³ or perhaps it was avoided *because* it was controversial.⁴⁹⁴ Davies and Allison point out that Matthew possibly did not mention circumcision because it had been revoked and so was not expected or practised in their community, thus meaning that Matthew's silence about its requirement was intentional, and its absence thus intended as instruction to not require it.⁴⁹⁵ But it is more likely that Matthew does not explicitly mention circumcision because it was assumed, implied, and taken for granted. As A. F. Segal and A. Runesson have both suggested, if Matthew's community did not practice circumcision, it would have been a significant departure from Jewish norms, and so would have been brought up and justified.⁴⁹⁶ That Matthew took the requirement of circumcision for

⁴⁹⁰ D. C. Sim, 'Matthew: The Current State of Research', in *Mark and Matthew I*, ed. E. M. Becker and A. Runesson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 33-51, 42.

⁴⁹¹ That Matthew's Gentile mission does require circumcision; S. Brown, 'The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission,' *NovT* 22 (1980), 193-221, 218; Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 44-45; Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 183-85; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 246-47; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 252-54; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 31-38, 380. That the Gentile mission does *not* require circumcision; Meier, *Law and History*, 61, 64; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 493; R. H. Gundry, 'A Responsive Evaluation of the Social History of the Matthean Community in Roman Syria', in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches*, ed. D. L. Balch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 62-67, 66, n. 21; Tuckett, 'Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?', 127. Some have a mediating position; that *either* baptism or circumcision is fine; W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), cxv. That only some Gentiles would have been circumcised (Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 161. See also Byrne, *Lifting the Burden*, 228, n. 8.

⁴⁹² Some commentators have pointed out that perhaps circumcision itself was not the all-important feature of a Jewish person that is commonly assumed. A. J. Levine advises that scholars need to avoid the 'monolithic view that all first-century Jews saw circumcision as the most important aspect of their religion or insisted upon the circumcision of Gentile sympathisers'. She also suggests that that circumcision was something done to infants, and so Matthew may not have been concerned with such practices. (Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 184-85; also Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 156-60). On the other hand, Josephus' narrative about Izates' conversion to Judaism explicitly emphasises the need for circumcision. Eleazar lectures the new convert; 'How long wilt thou continue uncircumcised? But, if thou hast not yet read the Law about circumcision, and does not know how great impiety thou art guilty of by neglecting it, read it now' (*Ant.* 20:34-48).

⁴⁹³ Saldarini, *Matthew's Community*, 156.

⁴⁹⁴ Tuckett, 'Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?', 126. See also Gundry, 'Matthean Community', 66, n. 21.

⁴⁹⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 493. So too Hagner, 'Sitz Im Leben', 258.

⁴⁹⁶ A. F. Segal, 'Matthew's Jewish Voice', in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches*, ed. D. L. Balch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 49, n. 38. Runesson highlights that this is the case for hand washing (15:1-20), using oaths (5:33-37; 23:16-22), and divorce (5:31-32; 19:1-12).

granted can be supported by other examples of Jewish texts that also do not mention circumcision, and yet did not advocate the abolition of the distinctly Jewish practice (1QS 6:13-15;⁴⁹⁷ ARN 26; y. Pesah 33b).⁴⁹⁸ D. C. Sim points that even in Matt. 23:15, when Jesus is condemning the Pharisees for their conversion practices, circumcision is implied but not mentioned outright.⁴⁹⁹ As a similar example, E. P. Sanders has noted in his study on covenantal nomism that the fundamental nature of covenant actually accounts for its lack of appearances in rabbinic literature,⁵⁰⁰ and the same principle can be applied to circumcision.⁵⁰¹

The absence of a directive on the topic of circumcision is inconclusive, but there are other aspects of the Gospel that can shed light on whether Matthew assumed circumcision was required of Gentiles. The Matthean Jesus does not actively seek to discuss all required aspects of the Law; the Gospel was not a treatise on the subject of the Law, but was a narrative of the Messiah. Throughout Matthew, general questions are asked of Jesus, but he does not give a systematic and thorough teaching on the topic of the Law. As A. J. Levine points out, Matthew did not explicitly speak about circumcision, but he also did not speak explicitly about menstruation laws. Both may have actually been a part of his community's living reality without requiring a mention in the narrative of Jesus' life.⁵⁰² This is also true for many fundamental aspects of Second Temple Jewish life that Matthew never mentions; the covenant, food laws, Jewish feasts and fasts. There are many significant areas of Jewish life which Matthew does not discuss explicitly. Thus, if Matthew expected Gentiles to undergo circumcision when they converted to the gospel, he does not need to have written so for it to hold true.

It is also important to note that in Matthew's Gospel all the main characters are Jewish. Jesus was born in a Jewish town, and most of his ministry takes place in Jewish areas. He was the Messiah of the Jewish god, whose coming and life was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures. All of Jesus' disciples or followers are Jewish, and are encouraged to follow the Torah in its entirety.⁵⁰³ There are minor Gentile characters (such as the centurion, and the Canaanite woman), but they are only minor, and never become disciples or followers of Jesus. So, although Matthew never mentions circumcision explicitly, there can be no doubt that the main characters in Matthew's

A. Runesson, 'Rethinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations: Matthean Community History as Pharisaic Intragroup Conflict,' *JBL* 127 (2008), 95-132, 104, n. 30.

⁴⁹⁷ Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition', 387.

⁴⁹⁸ Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 493, n. 27.

⁴⁹⁹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 234.

⁵⁰⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 420-21.

⁵⁰¹ On this point of the importance of the subject not correlating to appearances in the literature, see G. Alon, *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World: Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud*, trans. I. Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1977).

⁵⁰² Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 184.

⁵⁰³ Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 33.

Gospel were intended to be seen as circumcised.⁵⁰⁴ A. Runesson has made a similar point in relation to the language in this passage; he has pointed out that the terminology in 28:16-20 also implies that a Law-abiding gospel was intended. Jesus' instructions to 'make disciples' (μαθητεύω) is telling, because this is an instruction to turn the nations into what Jesus' followers already were, i.e. Jews. He highlights that throughout the story, Jesus' disciples had been told to follow the Torah to its finest detail, and now in 28:16-20, Jesus is telling them to do the same for all the nations.⁵⁰⁵ Runesson writes that the baptismal formula confirms this impression, wherein new converts will be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which, taken in the context of the Gospel, is an initiation into a Jewish messianic movement.⁵⁰⁶

One of the most convincing arguments for the expected circumcision of Gentile converts in Matthew, then, is the argument of continuity. Levine writes that Matthew's Gospel has a positive attitude towards this motif of continuity, and as such, it makes the most sense that circumcision was implied and its validity taken for granted.⁵⁰⁷ Given the Gospel's emphasis on following the Law, and no explicit teaching to the contrary, there is no reason to think baptism was intended as a replacement for circumcision.⁵⁰⁸ Matthew encourages total obedience to the Law, and circumcision is implied in this. Because the pre-resurrection ministry involved Jesus' followers being circumcised, then this requirement is most likely applied to all future disciples as well.⁵⁰⁹

Given the strong arguments in favour of a reading that the great commission does *not* abolish the Torah or circumcision, it is curious why this is such a persistent interpretation of the text. Why is a Law-free gospel seen in Matthew when there is no overwhelming evidence for it, either in the great commission or the rest of the Gospel? It is possible that the Matthean universal mission is too frequently interpreted through the dominant lens of the Pauline Gentile mission, which *was* Law-free, and which went on to dominate the Christian tradition.⁵¹⁰ Possibly just as influential in the reading of 28:16-20 is the later Christian tradition that indeed does have baptism as the sole initiation rite. But to read Paul or the later church into Matthew is unfair to the text. Matthew has too often been read through the lenses of other traditions. Rather than viewing Matthew anachronistically, a more appropriate reading of the text itself shows that Matthew expected the Law-abiding gospel he had been promoting the entire narrative to continue after Jesus' resurrection. There is nothing in the events since Jesus' journey to Jerusalem that suggests an abandonment of Jewish Law.

⁵⁰⁴ See Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 32.

⁵⁰⁵ Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 34-35.

⁵⁰⁶ Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 35-36.

⁵⁰⁷ Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 183.

⁵⁰⁸ Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 181.

⁵⁰⁹ Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 183.

⁵¹⁰ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 251; White, '(Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul', 362-67.

The Matthean Gentile mission is thus one that continues the message of the pre-resurrected Jesus. For Matthew, salvation shall come through righteousness as interpreted by the Law, and this is the case up to and including the final commissioning. Matthew's Gentile vision in 28:16-20 did not establish a new and secondary mission, but was to invite the nations into the existing ancient covenant. The mission was not changed in 28:16-20, but rather opened to include Gentiles into the Israelite covenant.⁵¹¹ In this view, Matthew's great commission to the nations is an extension of the same gospel that the Matthean Jesus has been preaching his entire ministry; *the good news was finally now being opened to the Gentiles*. This also fits into the prophetic view that the Jewish religion was to at some point encompass all the nations.⁵¹² Matthew does not reject Israel, but only opens the gates to the Gentiles. The Kingdom of God is now wider, and more universal. For Matthew, there are not two missions, but one single mission for all.⁵¹³ The evangelist's great commission is thus a call for the nations to be following the Law of the Hebrew god, because he rules over whole world; heaven and earth. His Law is thus universal.⁵¹⁴ Sim points out that Matthew's universalism is too often seen through the prism of Paul. Instead, Matthew's universalism is Jewish, and would have seen the Gentile mission as one to convert Gentiles to Judaism.⁵¹⁵ For Matthew, then, the Gentile mission was not a mission to the Gentiles as Gentiles (cf. Mark), but a mission to the Gentiles as future Jews.

3.2.1 Matthean Amendments to Mark

Matthean amendments to Mark also demonstrate his different ideas about the Gentile mission. It was detailed in the previous chapter how Mark's narrative has Jesus delivering his ministry to distinctively Jewish audiences in Jewish towns, and also to distinctively Gentile audiences in Gentile towns. What results is an intricate but implicit narrative about Jesus criss-crossing the Sea of Galilee to deliver his ministry to both Jews and Gentiles. Upon close analysis of Matthew, it is evident that he has omitted many of Mark's references to Jesus travelling to the Gentile areas. While keeping the same stories, Matthew has eliminated that Jesus travelled to Bethsaida (Matt. 14:22 cf. Mark 6:45) and Sidon and the Decapolis (Matt. 15:29 cf. Mark 7:31). Matthew has eliminated the Markan story of the blind man healed in Bethsaida, and does not mention Jesus' travel to that area at all (Matt. 16:13 cf. Mark 8:22-26). The cured Gerasene demoniac proclaimed

⁵¹¹ Levine, *Matthean Salvation History*, 3; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 243-46; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 252; Carlston and Evans, *Synagogue to Ecclesia*, 291; Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 432.

⁵¹² Allen, *Matthew*, lxxvi.

⁵¹³ Runesson points out that Paul, too, believed that Jew and Gentile were now alike (Gal. 3:28), though the two authors interpret this differently. Runesson, 'Judging Gentiles in Matthew', 150.

⁵¹⁴ 'A kind of Eden restored, when humanity as a whole is united under God's rule'. Runesson, *Divine Wrath and Salvation*, 431.

⁵¹⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 251.

Jesus' works in the Decapolis in Mark (5:20), but not in Matthew (8:34). In taking away these geographic indicators, Matthew effectively dismantles Mark's geographical symbolism of Jesus' dual mission to the Jews and Gentiles.⁵¹⁶ But Matthew cannot be said to never have Jesus preach to Gentile areas. He keeps (but shortens) the story of the Gerasene demoniac (Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20), and changes the location to the country of the Gadarenes. Just before the story of the Syrophenician woman (the Canaanite woman for Matthew), Jesus does go to Tyre and Sidon, but withdraws there (ἀναχωρέω), adding a hesitance to the action that is not in Mark (Matt. 15:21 cf. Mark 7:24). Elsewhere, Matthew omits that Jesus had followers from Tyre and Sidon (Matt. 12:15 cf. Mark 3:8; Luke 6:17), but had earlier added that he had followers from the Decapolis (4:25 cf. Mark 3:7-8; Luke 6:17). Matthew also notably adds material sometimes referred to as 'particularist sayings' where he explicitly states that Jesus' ministry is for Israelites only; in his commissioning to the disciples, he adds 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles' (10:5-6), and in the story of the Syrophenician/Canaanite woman, the Matthean Jesus tries to ignore her, saying 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (15:24).

However, these amendments can signal something greater. In reducing Mark's dual-mission theology, Matthew is possibly emphasising that Jesus only had one mission; the same mission for everyone. Unlike Mark, Matthew has made no attempt to draw the Gentiles and Jewish missions as separate. In fact he has deliberately altered his Gospel content in order to make sure that the Jewish mission is the only one that Jesus works on. The Gentiles eventually will be a part of it (24:14), but they will be a part of the same single mission that Jesus has been preaching all along; for Matthew, the Gentile mission is an extension of the same mission, not the commissioning of a new or separate one.

3.3 Chapter 3 Conclusions

Discussion in this chapter has made Matthew's position in the early church apparent. It was seen that Matthew has a conservative stance on the Law, as observed in various aspects of his Gospel, most notably in 5:17-19, the trio of sayings which demonstrate that Matthean community saw themselves as upholding the full extent of the Law. But not only did Matthew advocate keeping the entire Torah in place, he advocated that Jesus had the most authoritative interpretation of it, through the principles of love, mercy, and the golden rule. The importance of the Law is also seen in the recurring warnings of the coming judgement. On various occasions it is explicit that

⁵¹⁶ Overman also notes this Matthean redactional tendency; Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 126-27. Not all agree; Harrington suggests, for example, that Matthew eliminated the first Bethsaida in Matt. 14:22 because they would eventually end up somewhere else. Harrington, *Matthew*, 224. In all this redaction, however, Matthew retains Mark's references to going to 'the other side' (Matt. 8:18, 28; 14:22; 16:5).

obedience to the Law has a direct consequence for the coming Kingdom of God. As such, Matthew has fit in the Law with a supremely important theme of future judgement and salvation.

In light of this conservative stance on the Law, the question of whether Matthew wanted Gentiles to also follow the Law is key. When a Gentile mission is commissioned at the very end of the Gospel, there is no hint or suggestion that a new gospel is to be taught to these Gentiles. On the contrary, Jesus expressly says that these Gentiles need to be taught what Jesus had been teaching the disciples. The great commission is thus effectively an expanding of the original gospel so that it is now open to the Gentiles. It is thus clear that Matthew would expect Gentiles to follow this gospel, which included utmost adherence to the Law.

As such, it can be seen that Matthew promoted a Law-abiding gospel for Gentiles. This is particularly notable given that Matthew's primary source, the Gospel of Mark, held the opposite view on this very issue. While Mark's Gospel had Jesus promote a mission to the Gentiles that challenged the Jewish Law in order to more openly preach to the Gentiles, Matthew restricts Jesus' mission to the Gentiles to begin with, and when it is actually commissioned, the Law is not compromised. Matthew, then, denies that parts of the Law can be abandoned. Matthew's changes to the themes in Mark are telling because Matthew has consciously departed from his source, these seem to be intentional changes that he has made to the Markan story. This is exemplified in Matthew's changes to the story about Jesus purifying all foods, and in the Sabbath controversies; in both cases Mark had Jesus questioning quite fundamental parts of the Jewish Law, but Matthew has subtly changed these narratives so that the Law itself is not questioned.

It is thus clear from an analysis of Matthew's Gospel, especially in comparison with Mark's Gospel, that Matthew promotes a Law-abiding gospel for the Gentiles. As such, he fits in neatly with the original Law-abiding gospel that existed in the earliest church, that was well-established in the time of Peter and James, and that continued into the second century.

In the first chapter of this study, it was noted that a Law-abiding gospel for Gentiles was a position probably held by James, Peter, and the original followers of Jesus. Not all abide by this assumption, and some scholars maintain that those who advocated a Law-abiding gospel in the early church must have come from a group similar to the false brothers at the Council, or from another party not related to the Twelve. If such a position is true, then one must accept the likelihood that the First Gospel was a successor of these false brothers, who alone insisted on a Law-abiding gospel for Gentiles. If Peter and James promoted a *Law-free* gospel, then Matthew stands quite apart from these apostolic roots, and stands more closely with false brothers who preached against the disciples and Paul. But this is unlikely as the Jerusalem disciples more likely

followed a Law-abiding gospel. Matthew's Gospel – with its strong allegiances to Peter (explored in the next chapter) – more likely reflects the position of the Jerusalem Church; that Gentiles needed to adhere to the Law.

Matthew has decidedly offered a narrative of Jesus' life whereupon a Law-abiding gospel is explicitly promoted and where Gentiles are welcomed into this gospel with the expectation of adhering to the Torah. And what's more, Matthew achieved this whilst using a source that held the opposite views; the first evangelist's opinion on this topic must have been strong in order to have consciously changed these aspects of Mark. Matthew has turned Mark's Jesus into a more Jewish figure, whose entire message is at home within a Law-abiding gospel.

Chapter 4: The Disciples and Family of Jesus in Mark and Matthew

It has so far been shown in this study that Mark and Matthew align with different perspectives in the early Christian movement; Mark with the Law-free tradition, and Matthew with the Law-abiding tradition. Up to this point in the study, it is possible for one to conclude that Mark's and Matthew's positions in the context of the early church extend only to aligning theologies on the topic of the Law. But a more connected picture of the evangelists with the early church debates is discernible in how each portrays some of the active players. This chapter will focus on the leading figures in the Law-abiding tradition; the disciples and family of Jesus. Peter and James were heavily involved in the early church conversations about the Law, with feature roles at the Jerusalem Council and the Incident at Antioch, as well as their general leadership of the communities at Jerusalem and Antioch; as such, these groups can be said to represent the Jerusalem Church and thus the Law-abiding tradition. The disciples and family of Jesus feature in both Gospel narratives, and it is in each evangelist's portrayal of these groups and figures that there is a good indication of a further and more conscious connection with the debate in the early church.

Analysis of Mark will begin the discussion, starting with the disciples. Mark's negative portrayal of the Twelve and Jesus' family has been widely noted; while they start off positively, they consistently fall short of what is expected of a disciple, and they eventually desert Jesus at his arrest. Jesus' family is rarely featured, but their entire portrayal is negative, and Mark comes close to accusing them of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This portrait of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem is significant coming from Mark, a Law-free Christian. Mark's picture of the disciples and Jesus' family could have been motivated by the early church conflict; not only is Mark Law-free – in opposition to James and Peter – he portrays those in positions of leadership of the Law-abiding gospel poorly, ultimately leaving the impression that they did not understand Jesus' teachings. In this way, it is possible that Mark is using his Gospel narrative to promote his Law-free theology over the Law-free theology of the leaders in Jerusalem and Antioch.

Discussion of Mark will be followed by discussion of Matthew. Matthew adapts most of the Markan stories which feature Jesus' family and the disciples, and while he maintains some negative aspects of their portraits, he by and large rehabilitates these characters from their poor portrayal in Mark's Gospel. While Mark emphasises the disciples' lack of understanding, Matthew highlights their strong understanding. While Mark gives the disciples little authority on which to claim legitimate leadership, the Matthean Jesus gives the disciples explicit authority to lead his future church. While Mark ends the disciples' role with desertion and betrayal just before Jesus' crucifixion, Matthew includes a post-resurrection meeting with the risen Jesus, symbolising Jesus' handing over evangelisation responsibilities. Matthew also gives a significant boost to the picture

of Peter, adding to the existing Markan stories, and inserting his own new stories that paint Peter as the definitive chosen leader of the Jesus movement. Matthew also rearranges and tones down Mark's stories about Jesus' family so that they read less harshly than the Markan counterpart. Matthew thus aligns himself more closely with those in the early church who advocated a Law-abiding Gospel.

4.1 The Disciples and Family of Jesus in Mark

4.1.1 The Disciples

The foolishness of the disciples in Mark has been well attested in modern scholarship.⁵¹⁷ The disciples start off in a positive light, but as the narrative progresses, show themselves to be inadequate for the role to which Jesus has called them. They misunderstand him (4:13; 6:51-52; 8:17-21, 32; 9:31-32; 10:35-45), are resistant to his teaching (4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:4), and wind up deserting him at the culmination of his earthly ministry (14:50). This portrayal of the disciples is not the main theme or purpose of Mark's Gospel, but it nevertheless demonstrates the author's prejudice against the leaders of the Jerusalem Church. It will be argued here that Mark's negative portrait of the disciples was polemical and was most likely motivated by the conflict between the Law-free and Law-abiding movements in the early church.

The first mention of the disciples in Mark depicts them in a favourable manner (1:16-21); Jesus calls Simon, Andrew, James, and John to follow him, and they oblige, abandoning their families and jobs without hesitation to become 'fishers of men' (1:17-20). As the narrative continues Jesus defends the actions of his disciples against the Pharisees on issues of fasting (2:18-22) and the Sabbath (2:23-28). Jesus then chooses the remainder of his disciples and no negative traits are mentioned, except when Judas is named ('... and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him', 3:19). The unique relationship between Jesus and his disciples is put into strong relief when Jesus says that while others are to receive his teaching in parables, the disciples will be privy to 'the secret of the kingdom of God' (4:11-12). Up to this point, the disciples' portrayal has been positive, yet Mark 4 sees the appearance of their faults. Significantly, the parable of the sower at the beginning of the chapter, teaches that the word of God does not always fall on good soil

⁵¹⁷ Some of the key texts on this topic are from J. B. Tyson, 'The Blindness of the Disciples in Mark,' *JBL* 80 (1961), 261-68; T. J. Weeden, *Mark – Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971); R. C. Tannehill, 'The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role,' *JR* 57 (1977), 386-405; E. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986); C. C. Black, *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate* (Worcester: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989); C. K. Rothschild, "'Have I Not Seen Jesus Our Lord?'" (1 Cor 9:1c): Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses in the Gospels of Mark and Paul,' *ASE* 31 (2014), 29-51.

(4:20).⁵¹⁸ This parable is followed by the disciples' first inability to understand the meaning of Jesus' teachings (4:13); shortly after, when the disciples are afraid of perishing on the Sea of Galilee (4:35-41), they are criticised by Jesus for their lack of faith and, for the first time, they appear not to be aware of the significance of Jesus' divine authority (4:41).

The next chapters involve a series of parables, miracles, large feedings, healings, and exorcisms, followed by the all-important cluster of stories that directly relate to the Law-free Gentile mission (6:53-8:10). As was covered in a previous chapter, this cluster of stories occurs after the disciples were initially hesitant to go over to Gentile territories (6:45-52), and so these stories have been framed by Mark as an assurance of the Law-free Gentile mission. But just after these stories, Jesus is once again with the disciples in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, and he is frustrated at them after they once again misunderstand his teaching (8:17-21). He rebukes them at length and his frustration with the Twelve is obvious at this point. He notably accuses them of seeing and not perceiving, and listening and not understanding, which is the same language he had used back in 4:11-12, to distinguish between insiders and outsiders. At this point an obvious change in the relationship between Jesus and the disciples has taken place; what was once implied as being a loyal and good relationship has now shifted to being one of consistent misunderstanding and frustration on Jesus' part.

From 8:31, Jesus begins to predict his passion. He makes three predictions (8:31, 9:31, 10:33-34), which are followed by Peter's denial of such an event (8:32), the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' words (9:32), and Peter, James, and John's query about their position in the kingdom (10:35-37). This last response is a new reaction, and it demonstrates that the disciples' fear and self-concern is now accompanied by a desire for authority, status, and power.⁵¹⁹ A further example of the disciples' inadequacy is seen in 10:13-17. Previously, Jesus had explicitly told the disciples on their way down from Caesarea Philippi, 'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me'. (9:36-7). But in the very next chapter, the disciples literally stop children from approaching Jesus (10:13-14).⁵²⁰ At their attempts to stop the children, the Markan Jesus was 'indignant' (ἠγανάκτησεν).

⁵¹⁸ See G. Fay, who looks literarily at 4:1-34 and argues that even on this level, the story functions as an introduction to the motif of the disciples' comprehension. G. Fay, 'Introduction to Comprehension: The Literary Structure of Mark 4:1-34,' *CBQ* 51 (1989), 65-81. Donahue points to language in the parable of the sower, especially to the seed that falls on 'rocky' (πετρῶδη) ground (4:16). In the parable, these seeds, upon hearing the word are joyous, but after a while they have no roots, and when trouble arrives, they fade away. Donahue suggests that this is a play on the name of Peter, who initially showed great enthusiasm, followed by complete failure. Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 15-16.

⁵¹⁹ J. D. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 116.

⁵²⁰ Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 37.

The disciples are temporarily shifted into the background while Mark focuses on key events of Jesus' entry and activity in Jerusalem, but the failure of the disciples reaches a climax in the passion narrative. Firstly, Judas betrays Jesus by colluding with the authorities, condemning him to death (14:10-11). Secondly, whilst praying at Gethsemane awaiting his arrest, Jesus takes his inner circle of disciples and asks them to keep awake while he goes off to pray alone. But when he returns, the disciples are asleep. This happens three separate times. After the third, Jesus is confronted by the authorities. 'The hour has come', he proclaims, and he is arrested (14:32-42). Thirdly, at this point, all the disciples 'deserted him and fled' (14:50). None, save Peter, are ever heard from again. Fourthly, Peter follows 'at a distance' (14:54), but only to deny three times that he ever knew Jesus (14:66-72).⁵²¹ Mark's resurrection narratives are quite limited. The youth in white robes at Jesus' tomb only tells the women to tell the disciples '[Jesus] is going ahead of you to Galilee, where you will see him' (16:7-8). But the women are afraid, and do not tell anybody what they saw.

Nearly all scholars agree that Mark's portrayal of the disciples is negative,⁵²² but the disciples are not portrayed as entirely bad in Mark's Gospel. In the beginning they are involved in the most important parts of Jesus' ministry; they are an exclusive group whom he has chosen, they are commissioned to spread the word themselves (3:14-15; 6:6-13), they are given the truth about the kingdom (4:11-12, 33-34; 9:30-31), and occasionally help Jesus in his miracles (6:37-43; 8:1-10).⁵²³ But after the first quarter of Mark's Gospel, there is little to redeem them. Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah in Mark 8:29 seems to be an isolated instance of understanding on the part of Peter, at least.⁵²⁴ And even so, it is immediately followed by Jesus' harsh rebuke of Peter. There

⁵²¹ Edwards points out that Peter's outright denial is contrasted with Jesus' outright confession (14:62). J. R. Edwards, 'Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives,' *NovT* 31 (1989), 193-216, 212.

⁵²² Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 89-118; R. Garafalo, 'The Family of Jesus in Mark's Gospel,' *ITQ* 57 (1991), 265-76, 272; J. Painter, 'When Is a House Not a Home? Disciples and Family in Mark 2:13-35,' *NTS* 45 (1999), 598-13; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 32-33; Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses'; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 90-94. Against this view, Matera says the disciples' incomprehension is not their fault. See F. J. Matera, 'The Incomprehension of the Disciples and Peter's Confession (Mark 6:14-8:30),' *Bib* 70 (1989), 153-72. In relation to this article, Hartin notes the 'extremes' which scholars like Matera go to in order to defend the disciples of Jesus. Their fundamental misunderstanding, he writes, is that Mark penned these characters as a literary device, not as an accurate and historical representation of these figures. P. J. Hartin, 'The Role of the Disciples in the Jesus Story Communicated by Mark,' *Koers* 58 (1993), 35-52, 42, n.7. But Matera is not alone. Goulder says the disciples' portrayal in Mark is 'ambiguous', and they were treated less harshly than the family of Jesus in Mark. See Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church', 859, 75.

⁵²³ Weeden, *Traditions*, 27.

⁵²⁴ Peter, as head of the disciples in Mark, is raised particularly in good moments, and falls spectacularly in bad moments. There is no time to detail Peter specifically here. See E. Best, 'Peter in the Gospel According to Mark,' *CBQ* 40 (1978), 547-58; W. S. Vorster, 'Characterisation of Peter in the Gospel of Mark,' *Neo* 21 (1987), 57-76; R. Whitaker, 'Rebuke or Recall? Rethinking the Role of Peter in Mark's Gospel,' *CBQ* 75 (2013), 666-82. F. Damgaard suggests that Mark was focused on the negative aspects of Peter's discipleship in order to parallel Paul's own 'biography of reversal', whereby there is a focus on the negative in order to emphasise the later good. See F. Damgaard, 'Persecution and Denial –

is no lead up and there is no follow through, and it is surrounded by the by-now-expected misunderstanding from the disciples.⁵²⁵ As T. J. Weeden points out, any hope that the disciples had turned a corner for the better after 8:29 is dashed in the last half of the Gospel.⁵²⁶

The absence of the disciples after Mark 15 is significant. They are not present at the cross, they do not assist in his burial, and they are not at the empty tomb.⁵²⁷ This is followed up by Mark's resurrection narrative. Of course, the ending to Mark's Gospel is disputed, and the abrupt ending of 16:8 is not an expected ending to a long narrative, but most scholars see this as the true intended ending of Mark's Gospel.⁵²⁸ As such, it has ramifications for the disciples in Mark, who are not forgiven, not redeemed, are not told that Jesus had risen, and so did not meet him in Galilee. In Mark's narrative there is no contact between the disciples and Jesus after his resurrection. The women do not deliver the hopeful message to the disciples.⁵²⁹ Mark is in fact explicit that the good news of the resurrection is not told to anyone (16:8).⁵³⁰

The imagery of those 'inside' and 'outside' is important in Mark's portrayal of the disciples. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus tells the disciples that he will reveal the secrets of the kingdom to them, but to everyone else, it will be told in parables (4:11-12). But as the narrative progresses, and the disciples grow to be more and more beyond understanding, the disciples transition from once being 'insiders' to becoming quite obvious (though not explicit)⁵³¹

Paradigmatic Apostolic Portrayals in Paul and Mark', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 295-310.

⁵²⁵ T. J. Weeden interprets this as the crux of Mark's polemic against the disciples. He suggests that Mark's community was in the throes of a Christological dispute and so Mark wrote his Gospel in order to present the different sides of the debate, with Jesus' understanding the true nature of Messiahship, and the disciples misunderstanding it. See Weeden, *Traditions*; T. J. Weeden, 'The Heresy That Necessitated Mark's Gospel', in *The Interpretation of Mark*, ed. W. R. Telford (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 89-104.

⁵²⁶ Weeden, 'Heresy', 90.

⁵²⁷ Weeden, *Traditions*, 44.

⁵²⁸ See Weeden, *Traditions*, 45-50; Hooker, *Mark*, 382; Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 211-12; Boring, *Mark*, 442; Collins, *Mark*, 799. For an argument against see Gundry, *Mark*, 1009.

⁵²⁹ Some dispute this. Often earlier Markan passages such as 14:28 are offered here as an assurance that the Gospel ends on a hopeful note. Gundry says that just like the predictions of Jesus' suffering are fulfilled, so is Jesus' anticipation of meeting the disciples after his resurrection. Gundry, *Mark*, 1012-21. J. R. Donahue argues that a Christian community in Rome would have heard of the post-Jesus career of Peter. Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 25.

⁵³⁰ Sim points out that, unlike the other Gospels, there are no Markan resurrection narratives that designate a particular mission or role to the disciples. In Mark, the disciples are not given any leadership appointments, or even trusted with a mission. Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 94. See C. K. Rothschild for her analysis of the implications of Mark's resurrection story for the Jerusalem Church. She concludes that Mark's criterion for becoming a disciple is contact with the post-resurrection Jesus. The absence of a resurrection narrative thus denies authority for many in the Jerusalem Church. Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 49-50.

⁵³¹ Edwards points out that the disciples are misunderstood insiders, and are never described as outsiders. See Edwards, 'Markan Sandwiches', 215.

outsiders.⁵³² Even though the disciples are specifically chosen by Jesus, and are privileged to insider knowledge of the kingdom. As was noted above, Jesus' rebuke of the disciples in 8:17-21 reflects the language he used in 4:11-12 to distinguish between insiders and outsiders. The most positive examples of understanding and discipleship are expressed by unnamed minor characters, including the leper (1:40-45), the paralytic (2:1-12), the deaf man (7:31-37), the blind man (8:22-26; 10:46-52), and the widow (12:41-44).⁵³³ Demons and other spiritual entities recognise Jesus when his own disciples do not (e.g. 1:24; 3:11-12; 5:6-7). Even the unnamed woman of 14:3-9 has made the connection that Jesus as Messiah must suffer, and so she anoints him for burial, while she is questioned by those around Jesus. Throughout the entire course of the Gospel, the disciples never understand as much as the minor characters do. In Mark the insiders (i.e. disciples) become outsiders, and the outsiders (i.e. minor characters) become insiders.⁵³⁴

Although Mark is the earliest Gospel that has survived, some authors have speculated on Mark's editorial work, and how the disciples were previously remembered in older traditions. T. J. Weeden points out that several pre-Markan traditions have a positive view of the disciples. The times they are mentioned in Q, they are positive occasions, and indicate the unique nature of the group (Matt. 5:1/Luke 6:20; Matt. 13:16-17/Luke 10:23-24; Matt. 19:28/Luke 22:30).⁵³⁵ R. Bultmann even argued that the Matthean Jesus' praise of Peter and designation of authority in 16:17-19 belonged to the original story and Mark chose to exclude it.⁵³⁶ So Mark possibly used sources that had positive views of the disciples, and so his negative portrayal of the disciples is even more intentional and thus significant.

As mentioned above, it is largely agreed that Mark's disciples are portrayed poorly as the Gospel progresses. But the reason for Mark's treatment of the disciples has no such consensus. Typically, arguments about this issue are divided into two camps, which for convenience's sake are still useful here. Those in one group argue that Mark's portrayal of the disciples served a purely pastoral purpose; that the author used the characters of the disciples in order to communicate some teaching about discipleship to Mark's community. Those in the second camp argue that Mark's portrayal of the disciples was mostly polemical, and was intended to be a criticism of the figures

⁵³² Agreed to by many, including W. H. Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 42; Hartin, 'Role of the Disciples', 46-47; J. Hanson, 'The Disciples in Mark's Gospel: Beyond the Pastoral/Polemical Debate,' *HBT* 20 (1998), 128-55, 133. P. J. Hartin writes that throughout the narrative the disciples demonstrate that they turn their backs on their original position as insiders and become outsiders. He also posits that the disciples lose their insider position to the reader; Hartin, 'Role of the Disciples', 41, 50. J. Hanson writes that the resurrection narrative confirms that the angel's hopeful message was never delivered to the disciples. They thus remain outsiders forever. See Hanson, 'Disciples in Mark', 133. Also see Goulder, 'Those Outside', for his take on Jesus' family as outsiders.

⁵³³ Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 169.

⁵³⁴ Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 32.

⁵³⁵ Weeden, *Traditions*, 42.

⁵³⁶ Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 258-59.

that were closest to Jesus in his lifetime.⁵³⁷ These two interpretations are relevant to interpreting Mark's conscious connections to the early church and so need some discussion.

The pastoral view argues that Mark used the characters of the disciples to meet the pastoral needs of his readers by using the narrative to function as an instruction for his teaching to the community.⁵³⁸ One of the central theses is primarily argued by R. Tannehill, who proposes that Mark wanted his readers to identify with the disciples, and by following their journey, to reflect on their own failures and the way these might be improved in an effort towards better discipleship.⁵³⁹ Despite the grim note that Mark's Gospel ends on, Tannehill argues that the resurrection narrative was used as a literary device to demonstrate that even post-resurrection, failure in discipleship still occurs.⁵⁴⁰ There are some reasonable arguments for the pastoral view. As Weeden points out, quite naturally, one would expect the disciples to be used as a means of portraying lessons about discipleship.⁵⁴¹ And undoubtedly there could have been some pastoral gain gotten from Mark's portrayal of the disciples. However, it is unlikely that this was Mark's intended effect when he composed his Gospel.

There are many credible objections to this pastoral view. First of all, the treatment of the disciples in Mark is too harsh to be explained fully by pastoral motivations.⁵⁴² In Mark, the disciples consistently do not understand Jesus, he rebukes them on multiple occasions, and they ultimately betray, desert, and deny him, with no redemption at the end of the narrative. Such a negative portrayal seems too critical to be have been put forward for pastoral reasons. Secondly, the pastoral theory espouses an overall positive view of the disciples that Mark does not have; if members of Mark's community were meant to associate themselves with the disciples, there is no subsequent good example for them to learn from. Mark leaves the disciples having rejected Jesus,

⁵³⁷ Wrede explained the foolishness of the disciples by suggesting it was part of Mark's wider Messianic secret, and that having his closest followers not understand Jesus during his ministry explained the fact that Jesus was not accepted as a Messiah during his earthly ministry. W. Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, trans. J. C. G. Greig (Greenwood: Attic Press, 1901, 1971).

⁵³⁸ Those who agree with the pastoral view include the following. K. G. Reploh, *Markus-Lehrer Der Gemeinde: Eine Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie Zu Den Jüngerperikopen Des Markus-Evangeliums* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1969); D. J. Hawkin, 'The Incomprehension of the Disciples in the Marcan Redaction,' *JBL* 91 (1972), 491-500; J. Lambrecht, 'The Relatives of Jesus in Mark,' *NovT* 16 (1974), 241-58; Tannehill, 'Disciples in Mark', Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 1-16, 98-30; E. S. Malbon, 'Disciples/Crowds/Whoever: Markan Characters and Readers,' *NovT* 28 (1986), 104-30; F. J. Matera, *What Are They Saying About Mark?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 55; Vorster, 'Peter', 69, 74; M. A. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 218-30; Whitaker, 'Rebuke or Recall?'; Damgaard, 'Apostolic Portrayals in Paul and Mark'.

⁵³⁹ Tannehill, 'Disciples in Mark', 392-93.

⁵⁴⁰ See E. Best, 'The Role of the Disciples in Mark,' *NTS* 23 (1977), 377-401; Matera, *What Are They Saying?*, 55; Whitaker, 'Rebuke or Recall?', and Malbon, 'Disciples/Crowds/Whoever', 123.

⁵⁴¹ Weeden, *Traditions*, 23.

⁵⁴² Hanson too points out that the pastoral theory does not give sufficient weight to the darkness of the disciples portrayed in Mark. Hanson, 'Disciples in Mark', 135.

and without ever having understood him. There is no lesson of redemption or eventual understanding. Mark's ending is hopeless and his portrayal of the disciples too harsh, and so it does not read like it was intended for pastoral lessons on how to be a good disciple. Another argument against the pastoral view has been put forward by D. C. Sim, who points out that the disciples were historical figures, and ones who had a significant position in the early church. Given their high position, it does not make sense to use such important figures in such a negative way purely for a pastoral purpose.⁵⁴³ Mark did not need to use the Twelve for this purpose; there are a plethora of minor characters in Mark who could have served as examples of good or poor discipleship. Instead, Mark glorifies these minor characters, and condemns the disciples. A pastoral intention from Mark then does not fully explain his overtly negative portrait of all the disciples.

The polemical view, on the other hand, suggests that the negative portrayal of the disciples in the second Gospel was used to discredit the authority of the disciples, some of whom were still prominent figures of the Jerusalem Church in or prior to Mark's time.⁵⁴⁴ Like the pastoral view, many authors vouch for a polemic motivation for Mark's portrayal of the disciples,⁵⁴⁵ but they often cite different motivations for such a polemic.⁵⁴⁶ Nevertheless, as F. J. Matera points out, these scholars agree on two key points; that Mark was at least partially written as a polemical document, and that his polemic was against the Jerusalem Church. The exact nature of their disagreement is not agreed upon, but they agree the disciples are used by Mark as a tool in his polemic against the family and disciples of Jesus.⁵⁴⁷ The polemical view is strong. It accounts for the harshness of the portrayal of the disciples, the repeated highlighting of their misunderstanding, and the continuing bad relationship after Jesus' resurrection. It is also notable that, given the context of the early church, Mark had due cause for wanting to portray the disciples poorly for polemical reasons.

There are some arguments against this view. For example, Tannehill points out that if Mark was intent on portraying the disciples badly, there would not be any material indicating that Jesus at *any* point gave them authority.⁵⁴⁸ In the first quarter of Mark the portrayal of the disciples

⁵⁴³ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 93.

⁵⁴⁴ Matera fittingly described the polemical view as seeing Mark as a window, through which one can see a struggle in the early church. Matera, *What Are They Saying?*, 41, 42.

⁵⁴⁵ Key supporters of the polemical view include the following. J. Schreiber, 'Die Christologie Des Markusevangeliums,' *ZTK* 58 (1961), 175-83; Tyson, 'Blindness of the Disciples'; Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 258, n.2; W. H. Kelber, *Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time* (Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress, 1974); Weeden, *Traditions*; Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church', 875 (even though Goulder says treatment of disciples 'ambiguous', it is 'polemical rather than pastoral'); Sim, 'Family and Disciples', Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses'.

⁵⁴⁶ See Weeden, *Traditions*; and Weeden, 'Heresy'; Tyson, 'Blindness of the Disciples', 265-66; E. Trocmé, *La Formation De L'évangile Selon Marc* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), 183; Kelber, *Mark's Story*, 52; J. D. Crossan, 'Mark and the Relatives of Jesus,' *NovT* 15 (1973), 81-113, 112.

⁵⁴⁷ Matera, *What Are They Saying?*, 46.

⁵⁴⁸ Tannehill, 'Disciples in Mark', 394.

is quite positive, and in 3:14 it was emphasised that Jesus chose the Twelve out of his own free choice, and later the disciples are given the authority to preach the gospel and to expel demons (6:7). Jesus also confides in the disciples mysteries he tells no others (4:11-12). In Tannehill's view, events reflecting the disciples' God-given authority, in the pursuit of discrediting them, surely should have been reduced or altogether removed. And he points out, Jesus' promise to share the secrets of the kingdom with the Twelve in 4:11-12 would be counterproductive to a polemical motivation. He points out that such words could easily be used by opponents to support the integrity of the disciples.⁵⁴⁹ However, these early positive stories about Jesus' disciples do not discount the polemical theory, and can be explained in several ways. Firstly, that Jesus' disciples were around during his ministry is historical fact, and to deny them outright would make Mark an unreliable author; it was better to involve them in the story and then consistently portray their failures. And secondly, the initially positive statements about the disciples clear Jesus of blame for selecting the Twelve in the first place. According to Mark he chose wisely, and they appeared to be good disciples at first and showed considerable promise. Jesus welcomed them into his circle, but after he did so their inadequacy revealed itself.

Of the two primary theories behind Mark's portrayal of the disciples, the polemical stands as one more likely to be the incentive. Undeniably the narrative serves a pastoral purpose, but the dramatic treatment of the disciples goes beyond what any author need do if he were writing purely for pastoral reasons. A polemical motivation presents a greater need for a negative portrayal of the disciples, and Mark's harsh critique of the disciples is fitting for such a purpose.

Earlier discussion about Mark's place within the early church also make it likely that Mark was undertaking a general polemic against the Jerusalem Church based on their different views on the Law and Gentiles, and the tensions that followed on from this difference; especially their clashes with Paul, the hero of the Law-free tradition, and possibly also the continuing general Law-abiding efforts in Gentile churches.⁵⁵⁰ Mark's Gospel undermines the authority of those in leadership positions in Jerusalem, calling into question their understanding of Jesus' teaching and the mandate with which they claim to lead the Jesus movement. This is also confirmed with Mark's portrait of Jesus' family who also were in leadership positions in Jerusalem, and whose portrayal is even harsher than that of the disciples (discussed below).

⁵⁴⁹ Tannehill, 'Disciples in Mark', 397.

⁵⁵⁰ J. B. Tyson too argues that part of polemic Mark had against the Jerusalem Church was about the relevance of the Law and the mission to the Gentiles. Tyson, 'Blindness of the Disciples', 266. F. J. Matera aptly describes this view as believing Mark's treatment of the disciples was a response to an 'external threat' to the Markan community. Matera, *What Are They Saying?*, 41, 42.

In this vein, one final and important aspect of the disciples in Mark is that they are resistant to Jesus' efforts to minister to the Gentiles.⁵⁵¹ This unwillingness, though not explicit, is expressed in multiple ways. Firstly, in their hesitation to Jesus' second feeding to the Gentiles, which they did not show towards his mass feeding to the Jews (6:37 cf. 8:4).⁵⁵² Secondly, at Jesus' every attempt to cross the Sea of Galilee toward Gentile territory, the disciples show resistance;⁵⁵³ in their first attempt to cross, the disciples are afraid of perishing (4:35-41), the second voyage is also terminated because of the disciples' misunderstanding (6:45-52), and only the third is successful, after Jesus' series of teachings about breaking down the barriers between Jew and Gentile (8:13).⁵⁵⁴ But even after this series of stories and actions about the Gentile mission (7:1-8:10), the disciples are talking amongst themselves trying to decipher Jesus' words about the yeast of the Pharisees. Overhearing their conversation, the Markan Jesus reveals his frustration at their misunderstanding; 'Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and fail to see? Do you have ears and fail to hear?' He then recounts his mass feeding miracles and tries to explain the significance of the leftover food, but the disciples do not understand and Jesus again admonishes them; 'Do you not yet understand?' (8:17-20). In these ways, Mark is most likely commenting on their particular misunderstanding about the Gentile mission. Whenever the Markan Jesus is attempting to take his ministry to the Gentiles, the disciples show their hesitance and their misunderstanding, at one point even preventing Jesus' travel to the 'other side' of the lake. While Jesus does eventually proceed with his Gentile ministry, the disciples' misunderstanding and unwillingness is made clear. In the context of the early church, it is likely that Mark is implying that what the disciples did not understand about the Gentile mission in Jesus' time, they also do not understand after his death when they are leading the church. Thus, their resistance to a mission to the Gentiles as they are in *Mark's* time is a result of their misunderstanding of Jesus' own mission in the first place.

The disciples in Mark then are portrayed as inadequate for their role; they consistently misunderstand Jesus' teaching, are resistant to his Gentile mission, are interested in self promotion, and ultimately betray, deny, and desert him. In Mark, then, the disciples do not properly understand Jesus' teaching or ministry, and so have little authority upon which to lead the church.

⁵⁵¹ Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 246; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 168-172. See also Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 11.

⁵⁵² Wefald, 'Separate Gentile Mission', 19; Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 170.

⁵⁵³ See Elmer on the significance of their role as 'fishers of men' (1:17) for the kingdom. Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 168.

⁵⁵⁴ Iverson, *Gentiles in Mark*, 40. As Elmer describes it, the disciples 'are being dragged reluctantly towards the Gentile lands on the other side of the sea'. Elmer, 'Gentile Mission in Mark', 170-71.

4.1.2 The Family of Jesus

There is little doubt that Mark portrays Jesus' family poorly in his Gospel.⁵⁵⁵ They are only featured in two stories, but each story gives a distinctly negative impression. Jesus' family could be said to come off worse in Mark's Gospel than do the bumbling but arguably well meaning disciples. Given the leadership role James and other members of Jesus' family occupied in the decades after Jesus' death, Mark's portrayal of Jesus' family is significant. No members of his family play any role in Jesus' earthly ministry (in fact Jesus cannot even perform miracles around them), and they are not mentioned after the resurrection. And whenever they appear in Mark's narrative, Jesus rejects them, sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly. Mark once again is using his narrative to criticise the leaders of the Law-abiding gospel. In Mark's Gospel, there are two scenes where Jesus' family are featured; 3:19b-35 and 6:1-6. The first is more significant, but both shall be looked at in turn.

The first appearance of Jesus' family occurs in Mark 3:19b-35, after Jesus' ministry has been active for some time. This is a contentious passage on the topic of Jesus' family in Mark because there are several linguistic issues. The identity of Jesus' companions in Mark 3:19b-21 is crucial for an accurate interpretation of this passage and so these linguistic issues with the text need to be studied first. The Markan passage reads; Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς οἶκον· καὶ συνέρχεται πάλιν [ὁ] ὄχλος, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς μηδὲ ἄρτον φαγεῖν. καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐξῆλθον κρατῆσαι αὐτόν, ἔλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη. The language of this passage is obscure in many ways. For example, the text is not clear about the meaning of εἰς οἶκον, which is the entire setting of the scene. Nor is Mark clear about who was not able to eat bread because of the crowds, or who Jesus' companions were who sought to restrain him (οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ). Mark also does not specify what these companions heard, or who was actually saying that Jesus was beside himself, or the actual meaning of the accusation ἐξέστη. So these must be cleared up as much as possible. Mark has left gaps in his meaning, but these can be filled by looking at the larger context of 3:19b-21.

One of the most disputed aspects of Mark 3:20-21 is the identity of those who seek to restrain Jesus. The text ambiguously reads οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ, literally, 'those with him'. Some clue might have been in the previous verse; Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς οἶκον. The Greek εἰς οἶκον is often translated as 'he [Jesus] went home' or 'he entered a house'. If Jesus was described as going to *his*

⁵⁵⁵ Those who agree include the following; Goulder, 'Those Outside'; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 487; B. Byrne, *A Costly Freedom: A Theological Reading of Mark's Gospel* (Strathfield: St Pauls Publications, 2008), 75; J. P. Ruiz, 'Between the Crèche and the Cross: Another Look at the Mother of Jesus in the New Testament,' *NTR* 23 (2010), 5-15, 8; R. Bauckham, 'The Family of Jesus', in *Jesus among His Friends and Enemies: A Historical and Literary Introduction to Jesus in the Gospels*, ed. C. Keith and L. W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 103-26, 112-13; Sim, 'Family and Disciples'. P. J. Hartin disagrees, see P. J. Hartin, *James of Jerusalem* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004), 9-15.

home, then this changes the setting of those who had been around him (the disciples; 2:13-19a), and so οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ would obviously refer to his family. However, the Greek is ambiguous, and the phrase can also mean a house generally (so Mark 2:1, 15),⁵⁵⁶ thus implying that Jesus was still in the company of his disciples. And so there is no clear indicator of who Jesus' companions may have been for the scene.⁵⁵⁷ However, there are several convincing arguments in support of the interpretation that οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ refers to Jesus' relatives. Most significant is the overall sandwich structure this passage forms with 3:22-30 and 3:31-35.⁵⁵⁸ The story does not stand on its own from 3:20-21. This passage does not have an ending;⁵⁵⁹ the story seemingly finishes with Jesus' companions' intent to go out and 'restrain' him. There is no resolution and no conclusion. Thus, it is almost certain that the story is continued later in 3:31-35. Here, the family of Jesus are explicitly named as 'his mother and his brothers' – and later, his sisters are included in the list (3:32) – and they continue trying to approach Jesus.⁵⁶⁰ Thus 3:31-35 seems to confirm that Mark also meant to refer to Jesus' family earlier in 3:21. J. R. Edwards notes other indicators that the stories in 3:21-22 and 3:31-35 are linked, for example, the setting for both is a house, and there is a crowd in both stories.⁵⁶¹ Mark thus has split in half and 'sandwiched' what was once a single story about Jesus' family thinking he was beside himself, and then going out to restrain him while he was teaching.⁵⁶²

The majority of scholars agree that οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ means to refer to Jesus' family,⁵⁶³ but there are a minority who argue that Jesus' companions in 3:20 are those who Mark has just

⁵⁵⁶ Hooker, *Mark*, 115.

⁵⁵⁷ J. Painter argues that οἶκος does not mean Jesus' home, but a house generally (so 1:1, 15). Painter, *Just James*, 25.

⁵⁵⁸ That Mark 3:20-35 forms a Markan sandwich is a common view. See Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 85; Lambrecht, 'Relatives of Jesus', 251; *Mary in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*, ed. R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried, J. A. Fitzmyer, and J. H. P. Reumann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 54-59; Edwards, 'Markan Sandwiches', 209-11; Goulder, 'Those Outside', 292; Hooker, *Mark*, 114; Gundry, *Mark*, 170; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 278; S. P. Ahearne-Kroll, "'Who Are My Mother and My Brothers?'" Family Relations and Family Language in the Gospel of Mark,' *JR* 81 (2001), 1-25, 11; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 129; Hartin, *James*, 11-12; Collins, *Mark*, 226; Byrne, *A Costly Freedom*, 72-73; Bauckham, 'Family', 113; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 86. For an argument against see Painter, 'Disciples and Family'.

⁵⁵⁹ Boring, *Mark*, 109.

⁵⁶⁰ Hooker, *Mark*, 115; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 129. M. E. Boring suggests that Mark's ambiguity in 3:21 is intentional and was used to heighten the suspense. Boring, *Mark*, 104.

⁵⁶¹ Edwards also points out a link between the actions of restraining Jesus and interrupting and seeking him; in both cases there is an intended interruption, and wanting to stop Jesus from completing his mission. Edwards, 'Markan Sandwiches', 210.

⁵⁶² E.g. Hooker, *Mark*, 114-15; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 278.

⁵⁶³ Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 55; Hooker, *Mark*, 115; Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church', 859; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 270; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 270; Ahearne-Kroll, 'Family Relations and Language', 12; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 129; Hartin, *James*, 12-13; Boring, *Mark*, Byrne, *A Costly Freedom*, 73, n. 9; Collins, *Mark*, 226; Bauckham, 'Family', 113; R. Jordan, 'The Significance of Mark 3:20-End for Understanding the Message of Mark's Gospel,' *ExpT* 124 (2013), 227-33, 232; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 86.

outlined in 3:13-19, that is the twelve designated disciples.⁵⁶⁴ However there are inherent problems with this understanding, notably ignoring the non-ending of 3:21 and the overall structure of Mark 3:20-35. Other scholars have also noted that the term οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ distinguishes the group at hand from the previously mentioned disciples.⁵⁶⁵ That Mark is referring to Jesus' family in his scene from 3:20-21 is more fitting with the pericope.

Exactly what Jesus' family were planning in order to interrupt Jesus is also relevant here. Mark uses the term κρατέω, meaning 'to restrain'. Several commentators have pointed out that forcible restraint is implied here, as Mark's other uses of the word indicate (6:17; 12:12; 14:1, 44, 46, 49, 51).⁵⁶⁶ The same verb is later used when the authorities arrest him, and so the intentions of Jesus' family here have arguably violent overtones.⁵⁶⁷ Not only do Jesus' family want to forcibly restrain him, they think that he was beside himself. Jesus' family's cause for worry about Jesus, ἐξέστη, is translated as 'out of his mind'. The term literally means 'to stand outside one's senses'. In Mark's time, insanity was often associated with demon-possession.⁵⁶⁸ This is a significant aspect of this passage, which shall be drawn out below.

There is also confusion over exactly who is saying that Jesus was beside himself. In the original Greek, it is Jesus' companions who were saying that Jesus was out of his mind (ἐλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη). But many modern translations add a buffer by naming some other 'people' as the originators of this accusation, and implying that Jesus' companions were trying to protect Jesus by helping him (e.g. NRSV 'for people were saying "he is out of his mind"'). But the original text does not mention other people at all – the subject of this accusation is 'those around him'. Thus this modern tendency should be ignored, and the original Greek text adhered to, and so Jesus' companions are the ones who are concluding that Jesus is beside himself.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁴ Painter argues that nothing in Mark 3:19-20 implies that Jesus is now in the company of his family, and up to this point in the narrative, the family of Jesus have not even been introduced. As such, the phrase οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ here is more applicable to the disciples. He also points out that οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ is used earlier in Mark to refer to his present company at the time, who were the disciples (1:36; 3:14). Thus, the story in 3:31-35, which *does* explicitly introduce Jesus' family, is less judgmental of them. This story shows no indication of hostility towards Jesus, they only wish to speak to him and send a messenger to do so. Jesus distances himself from them, but the critique is less harsh than he paints for other groups in the Gospel. See Painter, 'Disciples and Family', 498-513; see also Garafalo, 'Family of Jesus', 268.

⁵⁶⁵ Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 84-85; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 270.

⁵⁶⁶ Painter, 'Disciples and Family', 500.

⁵⁶⁷ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 279. Hooker also points out that the use here must have implied violence due to its later use in arresting Jesus, and Donahue and Harrington point out the same. Hooker, *Mark*, 115; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 129.

⁵⁶⁸ See John 10:20. Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 14; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 87.

⁵⁶⁹ Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 56-7; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 87. For more detail on the Greek technicalities of 3:20-35 see: Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 69-76.

So while Mark 3:19b-21 has some obscure and ambiguous language, a reading of the passage in the wider context of the pericope shows that Jesus has travelled to his home, and those with him (in this context, most likely his family) have moved to restrain him because they thought he was out of his own mind.

Following this passage, in the middle of his ‘sandwich’ concerning Jesus’ family, Mark has a story of Jesus’ confrontation with some scribes who have come down from Jerusalem (3:22-30). The scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebul, and Jesus rebukes them, saying that Satan cannot cast out Satan, and that those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit are guilty of eternal sin. The middle stories in Markan sandwiches are often significant for the surrounding story, and act as the hermeneutical key for figuring out the outside story.⁵⁷⁰ This is the case with 3:19b-35.

That insanity was so often associated with demon possession is important for the filling in this Markan sandwich. The theme of possession is hinted at in Mark 3:19b-21 with his family’s accusation, but it is explicitly brought up in the story of the Beelzebul controversy; further supporting the translation that ἐξέστη has possession implications.⁵⁷¹ Just after Jesus’ family implicitly mistake Jesus’ actions for being associated with demon possession,⁵⁷² Jesus is explicitly accused of being in line with Beelzebul by the scribes and Jesus responds to such accusations.⁵⁷³ His response to the scribes is, firstly, to argue that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, but then, he adds that those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit are guilty of an eternal sin.

In choosing to pair these two stories, Mark is comparing Jesus’ family to the blasphemous and contrary scribes, who throughout Mark are synonymous with other enemies of Jesus; the Pharisees and the Herodians. According to Mark’s arrangement of the stories, Jesus’ family are in fact little better than these enemies who plot to kill Jesus and challenge and oppose him regularly.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷⁰ That the story of the scribes has ramifications for the story about Jesus’ family has been suggested by Edwards, ‘Markan Sandwiches’; Hooker, *Mark*, 114; Ahearne-Kroll, ‘Family Relations and Language’, 11; Bauckham, ‘Family’, 113.

⁵⁷¹ Sim, ‘Family and Disciples’, 86-87; also Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 271. For a different view, Garafalo argues that it could also mean ‘he was agitated’, a more positive interpretation for whoever was trying to restrain him. Garafalo, ‘Family of Jesus’, 269.

⁵⁷² Sim argues that the translation ‘for people were saying he was out of his mind’ is dubious, and intentionally designed to guard Jesus’ family from blame. See Sim, ‘Family and Disciples’, 87; see also Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 270-71.

⁵⁷³ Brown & co. point out that, read as a pair, 3:21-22 read as a double accusation against Jesus. His companions were saying he is out of his mind. The scribes were saying he’s possessed by Beelzebul. Both groups have an exceptionally negative view of Jesus. See Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 57.

⁵⁷⁴ In this light, Goulder proposes an interesting theory. He argues that James was likely seen as a Pharisee by the Pauline churches. This accounts for, he argues, Jesus’ frequent clashes with the Pharisees in Mark,

Further, a few scholars have also suggested that 3:28-30 was not originally part of the story about the Beelzebul controversy.⁵⁷⁵ Instead, they argue that Mark has deliberately placed this saying about the unforgivable sin into this specific context.⁵⁷⁶ As such, Mark seems to have intentionally placed 3:28-29 in its current association with the Beelzebul controversy and in the sandwich about Jesus' family. Mark's intentional placement of this unforgivable sin in this particular context of his family's actions makes it likely that Mark was sending a strong message against the family of Jesus.⁵⁷⁷ Further to this, D. C. Sim writes that accusing Jesus of being possessed by a demon instead of the Holy Spirit (1:11) constitutes blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the sin Jesus has just labelled as unforgivable.⁵⁷⁸ Mark's construction of this pericope is thus sophisticated and intentional. Though he has written a story about Jesus' conflict with the scribes, Mark has also indirectly condemned Jesus' family as being guilty of the only unforgivable sin.⁵⁷⁹

Mark 3:31-35 returns the direct attention to Jesus' family again, after Jesus' conflict with the scribes. Jesus' mother and brothers (named explicitly this time, ἡ μήτηρ and οἱ ἀδελφοί), find Jesus and call to him while he is teaching a crowd. The crowd alert Jesus to his family's presence, but he ignores his family, and instead returns his attention to the crowd, teaching that his real family are those who do the will of God. Given the events of 3:19b-30, the most obvious implication from this text is that Jesus rejects his family; his *true* family are not his mother and brothers, but the crowd around him. To further this distance from his biological family, Jesus does not even respond to them; he ignores them and instead talks to the crowd.⁵⁸⁰ There is no direct contact between Jesus and his family in this entire pericope. Even his family's request to speak to Jesus is mediated through the crowd.⁵⁸¹

especially when historically, it is uncertain that Pharisees would even have been settled around Galilee. He argues that whenever the Markan Jesus speaks out against the Pharisees, he speaks with the voice of Paul. Thus, he concludes that in Mark, the real conflict with Jesus comes from the Pharisees, and by implication, Jesus' family at the Jerusalem Church. See Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church'.

⁵⁷⁵ Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 92-96; H. T. Fledderman, 'Mark's Use of Q: The Beelzebul Controversy and the Cross Saying', in *Jesus, Mark and Q: The Teachings of Jesus and Its Earliest Records*, ed. M. Labahn and A. Schmidt (Cornwall: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 17-33, 26-27; Boring, *Mark*, 109. For an alternative view see Lambrecht, 'Relatives of Jesus', 242.

⁵⁷⁶ The saying arguably fits into the so-called 'Mark-Q overlap', and Luke probably retains the original use of the saying (Luke 12:10 cf. 11:14-23). See Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 92-96.

⁵⁷⁷ Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 92-96.

⁵⁷⁸ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 88.

⁵⁷⁹ That Mark is condemning Jesus' family in his narrative of the scribes and Beelzebul is a common stance. See Crossan, 'Relatives of Jesus', 92-96; Lambrecht, 'Relatives of Jesus', 242; Edwards, 'Markan Sandwiches', 210; Goulder, 'Those Outside', 295, 298; Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 13-14; Painter, *Just James*, 21; Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 88. Perhaps tellingly, 3:20-21 does not appear in Matthew or Luke. Painter suggests that the later evangelists possibly regarded it as a Markan redaction. Painter, *Just James*, 27.

⁵⁸⁰ Byrne, *A Costly Freedom*, 75.

⁵⁸¹ Hooker, *Mark*, 118. For an alternative point of view, see Hartin, who writes that nothing about 3:31-35 implies a rejection of Jesus' natural family. Hartin, *James*, 14-15. Goulder points out that in this scene,

Mark 3:31-35 further emphasises the distance between Jesus and his family by twice describing them as ‘outside’ (ἐξω; 3:31, 32).⁵⁸² Their position ‘outside’ represents their isolation from Jesus’ ministry, and the crowd’s position directly around Jesus reinforces their position as Jesus’ true family.⁵⁸³ M. D. Goulder draws a connection between the narrative about Jesus’ family (Mark 3:31-35), where they are twice described as being outside (ἐξω), and the following explanation of parables. ‘To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside (ἐξω), everything comes in parables; in order that they may indeed look, but not perceive; and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven’ (4:11-12). Goulder concludes that Mark is intentionally drawing the relatives of Jesus as being outside the circle of salvation.⁵⁸⁴

Even at its best interpretation, Mark 3:31-35 is still a statement about the insignificance of Jesus’ biological family in the new kingdom.⁵⁸⁵ Even if 3:19b-21 was not about Jesus’ family, and 3:31-35 was their sole occurrence in Mark, it is an underwhelming portrait, and does nothing to support the immense role that Jesus’ family had in the early church.⁵⁸⁶ But 3:19b-35 does exist as a whole, and the story of the scribes in the middle serves as a hermeneutical key for the surrounding story about Jesus’ family. Read together, Mark has discredited Jesus’ family and denied their close relationship with Jesus – and in the words of Jesus himself. He has indirectly accused them of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and rejected them as being his real family.

The second and final pericope involving Jesus’ family occurs in Mark 6:1-6. They are not actively present in the scene, but they are mentioned in Jesus’ conversation with others in his home town. In this scene, Jesus has returned to his home town, and after hearing his teaching in the synagogue, people ask, ‘Where did this man get all this? ... Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?’ Jesus responds by saying that prophets are without honour in ‘their hometown, and among their

Jesus’ family cannot wait until he has finished teaching; they want to interrupt him, and metaphorically, his mission. Goulder, ‘Those Outside’, 292. As Peter will later learn, interrupting Jesus’ mission has angry consequences from Jesus (8:33). See Edwards, ‘Markan Sandwiches’, 210.

⁵⁸² Ruiz, ‘Mother of Jesus’, 9.

⁵⁸³ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 285-86.

⁵⁸⁴ Goulder, ‘Those Outside’, esp. 291-92.

⁵⁸⁵ Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 53.

⁵⁸⁶ Mark 3:21-22 does seriously change the nature of the following account of Jesus’ family in 3:31-35.

Without it, 3:31-35 is a drastically different story. Painter argues that 3:31-35 is a stand-alone story about Jesus’ family, and their first appearance in Mark. He argues that this story, once freed from the context of 3:20-21 is more about Jesus’ sayings about true family, than his biological family. This family query from his mother and brothers is used merely as an opportunity to talk about Jesus’ eschatological family – the request of his biological family is never resolved, and so was not the significant part of the story. See Painter, *Just James*, 28-30.

own kin, and in their own house'. Though Jesus does not mention his family by name in his dialogue (even though the other townsfolk of Nazareth did), who else would be his kin (6:4) but his mother and brother and sisters?⁵⁸⁷ This is a clear reference to Jesus' family,⁵⁸⁸ and so this passage is yet another example of Jesus' family not believing in his ministry, and it builds upon the negative portrayal that was started in 3:19b-35. Jesus' criticism in this passage is also aimed at his fellow townspeople, but his kin are specifically cited.⁵⁸⁹ Mark concludes the pericope with Jesus' reaction; 'and he was amazed at their unbelief' (6:6). Because of their unbelief, Mark notes that Jesus could not work any deeds of power, except for a few healings. The implication of this is immensely significant; Jesus *could* not conduct his ministry around his family.

One final point is that this story is a striking absence of faith compared with the responses to his last two miracles at the land of the Gerasenes and in Jairus' house.⁵⁹⁰ In these previous stories, Jesus' miraculous deeds are met with instant conversion to his ministry (5:18-20), and Jairus' family being 'overcome with amazement' (5:42). These stories set a dramatic contrast to the cold reception Jesus receives in his home town.

Mark consistently portrays Jesus' family as not only misunderstanding, but potentially being blasphemous, and being actively rejected by Jesus. Nothing in Mark's Gospel supports their positions of power in the early church. From Mark's reading, Jesus' biological family do not hold particular standing in the new kingdom; these members were rarely even around for Jesus' earthly ministry, and when they were, they had a stifling presence; restraining him or muting his powers. The disciples in Mark are foolish but arguably well-meaning, whereas Jesus' family is portrayed as outside his ministry.⁵⁹¹ They are the real condemned of Mark's polemic.

4.1.3 Conclusions

Taken together, Mark's Gospel contains a strong criticism of the leading figures in the Jerusalem Church. Mark portrays the disciples as fools who do not understand Jesus' teaching, and portrays Jesus' family as, at best, outside his ministry, but at worst, eternally damned. Given the strength of Mark's polemic, it is curious as to what motivated Mark's portrait. Given the context of the early church, and given Mark's alignment with the Law-free side of the conflict, it is entirely likely that Mark's critique against the disciples and family of Jesus was motivated by these conflicts. Exactly

⁵⁸⁷ Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church', 860.

⁵⁸⁸ Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church', 860.

⁵⁸⁹ Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 89.

⁵⁹⁰ Byrne, *A Costly Freedom*, 104.

⁵⁹¹ Goulder suggests this reflects the historical reality, which suggests that Peter was weak and prone to compromise (Gal. 2:11-14), whereas James was more strict on obedience to the Torah. Goulder, 'Those Outside', 293-4, 302.

what aspect of these conflicts Mark was motivated by is open to speculation. Perhaps Mark was simply rejecting the Law-abiding gospel by rejecting those who promoted it. At the time of Mark's writing, the Pauline and deuterio-Pauline letters testify that there were active Law-abiding missions among Christian communities throughout Asia Minor and Europe, and there is every chance Mark may have crossed paths, or even been the target of, such efforts and so was reacting to such opposition. Perhaps Mark was defending Paul, who was also the target of Law-abiding efforts related to these disciples. The exact motivation of the polemic is unknown, but given the history of the early church, it is entirely likely that Mark's polemic against the disciples and family of Jesus was motivated by their conflicting positions in this debate. The negative portrayal of the disciples and Jesus' family is best and most easily explained by Mark striving to serve the interests of his Law-free church by painting the leaders of the Law-abiding gospel in a negative light.⁵⁹²

4.2 *The Disciples and Family of Jesus in Matthew*

4.2.1 The Disciples

While the topic of the disciples in Mark has been well covered in scholarship, this is significantly less so for the disciples in Matthew.⁵⁹³ Even when such discussion does occur, it is not usually in the context of Matthew and a Markan polemic against the Jerusalem Church. While it is rarely a focus of interest, most scholars today hold that Matthew's portrayal of the disciples is generally more positive than Mark's.⁵⁹⁴ The reasons given for this vary; it has been argued that Matthew's improved view was merely another general way that Matthew polished Mark's rough edges,⁵⁹⁵ or that the disciples needed to be improved in order to be shown to be better than the Pharisees.⁵⁹⁶ It

⁵⁹² Some who agree; Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church'; Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses'; Sim, 'Family and Disciples'.

⁵⁹³ There has been some debate recently about whether Matthew portrays the disciples as historical figures rather than reflections of Matthew's community (as per G. Strecker, 'The Concept of History in Matthew', in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. G. N. Stanton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 81-100), or as transparent figures who indeed *do* reflect the Matthean community (so U. Luz, 'The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew', in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. G. N. Stanton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 115-48. Most now think that both apply: Davies and Allison, *Matthew 8-18*, 158-59; J. Willitts, 'The Twelve Disciples in Matthew', in *Matthew's Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*, ed. D. M. Gurtner, J. Willitts, and R. A. Burridge (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 166-79.

⁵⁹⁴ For example, see; E. Klostermann, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1927); Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 124-41; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 8-23; R. A. Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait of the Disciples: How the Text-Connotted Reader Is Informed* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997), 3; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 192-96; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 43-45; Joseph, 'Heaven and Earth', 185; F. J. Moloney, *A Body Broken for a Broken People: Divorce, Remarriage and the Eucharist*, Third ed. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2015), 103-07. For an alternative view, see G. Barth, who highlights Matthew's additional material that highlights the disciples' flaws. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 118-121.

⁵⁹⁵ See W. C. Allen, who says that Matthew was striving for a more reverential treatment of the disciples; Allen, *Matthew*, xxxv.

⁵⁹⁶ Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 45.

will be argued here that the disciples are rehabilitated in Matthew's Gospel from the portrait they have in Mark not only in an effort to generally refine Mark's Gospel, but out of Matthew's closer affiliation with the Law-abiding tradition, and possibly also his alignment with the historical figures themselves, especially Peter. Matthew's portrayal of the disciples (and later, his family) fits neatly within the larger context of the early church; in his Gospel, Matthew has rehabilitated the disciples from Mark's portrait in order to more positively show the leadership of the Jerusalem Church and the Law-abiding tradition as the legitimate leaders of the Christian movement.⁵⁹⁷

Matthew does not drastically change the narrative course of the Markan Gospel, and this means his portrait of the disciples generally follows the same series of events; Jesus calls the disciples, commissions them, and teaches them throughout his ministry. However, Matthew's changes to Mark in this area are noticeable, both on a smaller and a larger scale. This discussion is thus well served by looking at Matthew's changes to Mark's story.

Most noticeable is the repeated emphasis on the disciples' understanding of Jesus' teaching. In contrast to the Markan motif that the disciples consistently did not understand Jesus,⁵⁹⁸ Matthew explicitly highlights that the disciples *did* understand and comprehend Jesus' teaching.⁵⁹⁹ A typical example is the conversation Jesus has with his disciples on a boat about the leaven of the Pharisees;

Mark 8:14-21	Matt. 16:5-12
¹⁴ Now they had forgotten to bring bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And he cautioned them saying, 'Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod'.	⁵ When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. ⁶ Jesus said to them, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees'
¹⁶ And they discussed it with one another, saying 'We have no bread'. ¹⁷ And being aware of it, Jesus said to them, 'Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread?'	⁷ And they discussed it among themselves, 'We brought no bread'. ⁸ But Jesus, aware of this, said, 'O men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves the fact that you have no bread?'
Do you not yet perceive or understand (συνίετε)? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?	⁹ Do you not yet perceive?
And do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?' They said to him, 'Twelve'. ²⁰ 'And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of	Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, how many baskets you gathered?

⁵⁹⁷ So Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 196.

⁵⁹⁸ Mark 4:13; 6:51-52; 7:18; 8:17-21; 9:31-32; 10:35-45.

⁵⁹⁹ Matt. 13:18 cf. Mark 4:13; Matt. 13:51 added to the end of the parables dialogue in Mark 4:1-32; Matt. 14:33 cf. Mark 6:51-52; Matt. 16:5-12 cf. Mark 8:14-21; Matt. 17:23 cf. Mark 9:32; Matt. 20:28 cf. Mark 10:35-45.

broken pieces did you take up?’ And they said to him, ‘Seven’.	
²¹ And he said to them, ‘Do you not yet understand (συνίετε)?’	¹¹ How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
	¹² Then they understood (συνῆκαν) that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of the bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

In Mark (8:14-21), Jesus warns the disciples to ‘beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod’. The disciples discuss this warning amongst themselves, but misunderstand it, for Jesus admonishes them; ‘Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?’ He then goes on to explain his warning, but the disciples do not comprehend it, for the pericope ends on Jesus’ frustration; ‘Do you not yet understand?’ Matthew (16:5-12) takes this exact same story, keeps most of the aspects, but changes the ending. He keeps the set-up of Jesus’ warning and the disciples’ initial misunderstanding, but he tones down Jesus’ first criticism of the disciples, only saying ‘Do you not yet perceive?’ notably omitting the term συνίημι (understanding) from Mark. From here, Jesus explains his teaching, as he had done in Mark, but Matthew’s ending is different. After Jesus’ explanation, Matthew writes, ‘then they understood (συνῆκαν) that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven bread but of the teaching of the Pharisees’. The pericope has been changed to end on a positive note for the disciples, and an assurance that they had correctly understood Jesus’ teaching. Such blatant changes to the disciples’ misunderstanding in Markan stories are common in Matthew. Even in parts of the Gospel where the disciples *did* ask for an explanation, it was given to them straightaway (13:36; 15:15; 16:9-12);⁶⁰⁰ all misunderstanding is cleared up immediately and the disciples explicitly understand Jesus’ teaching.⁶⁰¹

Changes on this theme are accompanied by other smaller changes that contribute to the overall positive view of the Twelve. Matthew omits Mark’s references to the disciples’ hardness of heart (Mark 6:52; 8:17),⁶⁰² and he omits occasions where the disciples do not know what to say to Jesus out of fear (Mark 9:6, 31-32; 14:40 cf. Matt. 17:4, 23; 26:43). He omits the Markan Jesus’ harsh reactions to the disciples (Mark 10:14 cf. Mark 19:13-15), or tones his anger down considerably (Mark 8:17-18 cf. Matt. 16:9). While the Markan Sons of Zebedee ask about their place in the Kingdom (10:35), the Matthean version has their mother ask the same question

⁶⁰⁰ Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 109; Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 128.

⁶⁰¹ G. Barth suggests that Matthew’s additions to the parable of the sower (‘He who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit...’) links understanding to the judgement (13:19, 23). See Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 110.

⁶⁰² Overman notes that when Matthew admonishes the disciples, it is for their lack of faith, not their hardened heart of lack of understanding (6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20). Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 128.

(20:20), deflecting such a self-interested question away from the disciples. Matthew also omits any suggestions that the disciples were afraid of Jesus (Mark 9:32 cf. 17:23; Mark 10:32 cf. 20:17).

Jesus' teaching is often directly aimed at the disciples in Matthew (5:1; 9:37-38; 18:1; 24:1-26:1 28:16-20),⁶⁰³ and their understanding of this teaching is emphasised (13:51, also above).⁶⁰⁴ Some have pointed out that Matthew's Gospel shows more interest in the disciples generally than do the other Gospels.⁶⁰⁵ P. J. Hartin notes that of Matthew's seventy-three appearances from the disciples, forty-five are exclusive to Matthew.⁶⁰⁶

Matthew most significantly adds to the disciples' positive image by giving them immense responsibilities that they are not given in Mark; they are explicitly given important roles in the future church (16:17-19) and in the eschaton (19:28),⁶⁰⁷ and they are given the authority to forgive sins (16:19; 18:18);⁶⁰⁸ all of which are significant, authoritative, and continuing roles in the future church. On top of this, they are told explicitly that they also will have authority in the Kingdom of Heaven, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (19:28). And finally, in the great commission, Jesus explicitly hands the disciples the responsibility of the mission to all the nations (28:16-20). He directly tells them to teach what Jesus has previously taught, and says them that he will be with them until the end of the age. Here, Jesus really clearly gives the disciples the authority to continue his ministry, and assures that he remains with them. These points are of utmost importance; here, Matthew is explicitly giving the disciples Christ-given authority to lead the Christian movement. Higher responsibility can hardly be given.

However, Matthew has kept (and added) some negative aspects of the disciples. The motif of faithlessness is recurring and often inserted by Matthew into the text,⁶⁰⁹ as is the accusation of not understanding, even if it is quickly resolved (15:16; 16:9). Matthew also brings the disciples

⁶⁰³ Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 135.

⁶⁰⁴ J. Willitts writes that Matthew first introduces the disciples during their commission in 10:1-5, and thus argues that in Matthew, the disciples have primarily a functioning role as missionaries. Willitts also points out that Jesus' directive to the disciples to feed the five thousand (14:16) also implies their leadership status in the future community. Willitts, 'Twelve Disciples', 177, 78.

⁶⁰⁵ S. N. Freyne, *The Twelve: Disciples and Apostles: A Study in the Theology of the First Three Gospels* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1968), 151-52.

⁶⁰⁶ P. J. Hartin, 'Disciples as Authorities in Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community,' *Neo* 32 (1998), 389-404, 392. Interestingly, at the same time, Matthew is not afraid to remove the disciples from a scene in order to focus more on Jesus (12:15, 16; 13:54; 15:39; 16:13a; 17:22; 20:29. See M. J. Wilkins, *The Concept of Disciple in Matthew's Gospel: As Reflected in the Use of the Term Μαθητής* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 165. S. N. Freyne also points out that Matthew introduces the disciples quite late in the narrative, but that when they are brought into the narrative, they immediately join the same mission of Jesus and continue on his work. See Freyne, *The Twelve*.

⁶⁰⁷ Willitts, 'Twelve Disciples', 177-78.

⁶⁰⁸ A role exclusive to Jesus in Mark and Luke. See Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 130-32.

⁶⁰⁹ Faithlessness of the disciples: 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:19; 21:21; 28:17; but also more generally 6:30; 17:17. See Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 119.

into the spotlight with their seemingly counterproductive suggestions that were not in Mark (Matt. 15:23 cf. Mark 7:24-30; Matt. 26:8 cf. Mark 14:4). He retains Jesus' harsh criticism of Peter (16:23 cf. Mark 8:33), and like in Mark, the disciples are unable to heal an epileptic boy (Matt. 17:14-21 cf. Mark 9:14-29). Matthew keeps all of the negative aspects of the passion narrative; Judas' betrayal (26:14-16, 47-50) the disciples' failure to stay awake in Gethsemane (26:36-46), their flight at Jesus' arrest (26:56), and Peter's denial of Jesus (26:30-35, 67-75).

All these changes that Matthew makes to Mark are significant, but arguably the most significant passage for the overall impression of the disciples is the resurrection narrative in 28:16-20; a passage that has already come under considerably analysis in this study. But this small pericope is of invaluable importance not only for issues of the Law and the Gentile mission, but for its portrayal of the disciples; here, the disciples are reconciled with Jesus, and so the overall tone of the disciples in Matthew ends on a very positive note.⁶¹⁰ Although Matthew retains many of the negative actions of the Markan disciples, especially in the passion narrative, the resurrection meeting between the risen Christ and the Eleven shows that Jesus has forgiven the disciples for whatever they may have done. But not only has he met with them in Galilee, he has given them explicit authority and responsibility to continue his ministry, and make disciples of all nations, assuring that he will always be with them. The authority the disciples are given through Matthew is confirmed in the Gospel's final scene. This is one aspect of the story that is completely different from Mark's. The Markan resurrection narrative ends abruptly, with Jesus risen, but the message of his resurrection not reaching his disciples. Matthew has transformed this ending, making the disciples the most authoritative people to carry on Jesus' gospel and ministry.

This overview of Matthew's changes is supported by analysis of two passages that demonstrate Matthew's general agenda in adjusting Mark's disciple stories. The first is the story on the Sea of Galilee walks on the water (14:22-33 cf. Mark 6:45-52).

Mark 6:45-52	Matt. 14:22-33
⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida,	²² Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side,
while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.	while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray
⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ And he saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them.	When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them.
And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass	²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the

⁶¹⁰ See also Harrington, *Matthew*, 416; Edwards, *Matthew's Narrative Portrait of the Disciples*, 131-34; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 195.

by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out;	disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out for fear.
⁵⁰ for they all saw him, and were terrified.	
But immediately he spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; have no fear'.	²⁷ But immediately he spoke to them, saying, 'Take heart, it is I; have no fear'.
	²⁸ And Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water'. ²⁹ He said, 'Come'. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; ³⁰ but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me'. ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'O man of little faith, why did you doubt?'
⁵¹ And he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased.	³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.
And they were utterly astounded, ⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.	³³ And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God'.

Here, Jesus has remained behind to pray while the disciples go across to 'the other side'. Jesus walks to them on the water, and the disciples react with fear (Matt. 14:26; Mark 6:50). Up to this point Matthew's changes are largely superficial, but Matthew changes the entire second half of the story. He firstly inserts a narrative whereby Peter attempts to walk on water as well. He is ultimately unsuccessful, and Jesus admonishes him for his doubt. Returning to the Markan narrative, when all characters are back inside the boat, the Markan disciples 'were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened' (6:51-52). Matthew has changed this response, and his disciples 'worshipped [Jesus] saying, "Truly you are the Son of God"' (14:33). Matthew has taken a Markan story, added a Petrine sub-narrative, and concluded the event with a very positive response from the disciples.

Matthew's changes to Mark can also be seen in his story of the transfiguration (17:1-13 cf. Mark 9:2-13);

Mark 9:2-13	Matt. 17:1-13
² And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, ³ and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus.	¹ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.
⁵ And Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah'.	⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish I will make three booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah'.

⁶ For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid.	
⁷ And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, ‘This is my beloved Son; listen to him’.	⁵ He was still speaking when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him’.
	⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were filled with awe. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, ‘Rise, and have no fear’.
⁸ And suddenly looking around they no longer saw any one with them but Jesus only.	⁸ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.
⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man should have risen from the dead.	⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, ‘Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead’.
¹⁰ So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.	
¹¹ And they asked him, ‘Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?’ ¹² And he said to them, ‘Elijah does come first to restore all things;	¹⁰ And the disciples asked him, ‘Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?’ ¹¹ He replied, ‘Elijah does come, and he is to restore all things;
and how it is written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?	
¹³ But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him’.	¹² but I tell you Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will suffer at their hands’.
	¹³ Then the disciples understood (συνῆκαν) that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

In both versions, Jesus selects a group of disciples and leads them to a high mountain, where he is transfigured, and converses with Moses and Elijah. In response to this, in both versions, Peter suggests constructing three dwellings for each of the three figures in their presence. Mark comments on Peter’s response, that ‘he did not know what to say, for they were terrified’ (9:6). Once again, the Markan disciples are left bumbling in the face of such majesty.⁶¹¹ Matthew leaves out this commentary, highlighting nothing at all wrong with Peter’s response. In fact, a few verses later, he adds to the story that the disciples ‘fell on their faces and were filled with awe’ at the scene in front of them (17:6). Another Matthean addition is seen in Jesus’ reactions to the group; the Matthean Jesus approaches them, touches them and comforts them; ‘Rise, and have no fear’ (17:7), confirming a positive relationship between them. On the way down the mountain, in both

⁶¹¹ Brown, Donfried, and Reumann, *Peter in the New Testament*, 61; T. V. Smith, *Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity: Attitudes Towards Peter in Christian Writings of the First Two Centuries* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985), 171-72; Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 216; T. Wiarda, *Peter in the Gospels: Pattern, Personality, and Relationship* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 155-56. For a different view see J. R. Markley, ‘Reassessing Peter’s Imperception in Synoptic Tradition’, in *Peter in Early Christianity*, ed. H. K. Bond and L. W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 99-108, 104-06.

narratives, Jesus orders his disciples to tell no one about what they had seen. Mark adds the note that the disciples ‘kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant’ (9:10); once again highlighting their lack of understanding. Matthew leaves out any reaction from the disciples. In both stories, the disciples ask Jesus about Elijah, and he explains his significance. Whereas Mark ends the pericope with Jesus’ teaching, Matthew adds the clarifying note; ‘then the disciples understood (συνῆκαν) that he was talking about John the Baptist (17:13). Matthew has thus explicitly ensured that the disciples have understood Jesus’ teaching.

In both of these examples, the same basic story has been conveyed, but the reaction of the disciples, and the general impression that emanates from each Gospel is vastly different. The Markan disciples show themselves to be repeatedly confused and overwhelmed by what Jesus shows them; they respond carelessly, and often do not understand what Jesus is showing them. The Matthean disciples, on the other hand, have a strong understanding of what they are being shown, and always respond appropriately, demonstrating their worthiness for the teaching that Jesus is imparting unto them.

One aspect that is frequently noted about Matthew is the favourable attention he gives to Peter.⁶¹² Peter already serves a prominent role among the disciples in the Gospel of Mark, but Matthew further highlights Peter’s role. In Matthew, Peter makes significant contributions that are unique to the first evangelist; he successfully walks on water (14:28-31), is praised and rewarded when he proclaims Jesus as Christ, ‘the Son of the Living God’ (16:15-19), and catches a fish with a shekel inside it after Jesus’ directions (17:24-27). These stories all involve direct dialogue between Jesus and Peter,⁶¹³ and, all take place in the ‘fourth book’ of Matthew (13:53-18:35), where he looks to ecclesiastical issues.⁶¹⁴ From early on, Peter’s name is emphasised where it was not in Mark,⁶¹⁵ and the names of the other disciples are repeatedly omitted,⁶¹⁶ making Peter stand out all the more.⁶¹⁷ Matthew is also the only evangelist to name Peter as the ‘first’ among the disciples (10:2).⁶¹⁸

Of course, the most prominent Matthean addition about Peter is the proclamation by Jesus once Peter confesses that he is the Christ (16:17-19). Even though the confession of Jesus as the

⁶¹² For an alternative view see R. H. Gundry, *Peter: False Disciple and Apostate According to Saint Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

⁶¹³ Segal, ‘Studying Judaism’, 270.

⁶¹⁴ Segal, ‘Matthew’s Jewish Voice’ 9.

⁶¹⁵ Matt. 4:18 cf. Mark 1:16; Matt. 8:14 cf. Mark 1:29.

⁶¹⁶ Mark 1:29; 5:37; 9:38; 10:35, 41; 13:3; 14:33. Wilkins, *Concept of Disciple*, 215, n. 157.

⁶¹⁷ Freyne also points out that in Matthew it is only Peter who receives a new name. Freyne, *The Twelve*, 152.

⁶¹⁸ J. D. Kingsbury, ‘The Figure of Peter in Matthew’s Gospel as a Theological Problem,’ *JBL* 98 (1979), 67-83, 69; Dunn, *Neither Jew nor Greek*, 263.

Messiah is in Mark's Gospel, and earlier in Matthew the disciples have proclaimed Jesus as Son of God (14:33), the enthusiasm of Jesus' response to such a declaration is unique to Matthew.

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church (μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν), and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind (δῆσῃς) on earth will be bound (δεδεμένον) in heaven, and whatever you loose (λύσῃς) on earth will be loosed (λελυμένον) in heaven."

The significance of this passage is explicit and obvious; Jesus names Peter as the foundation of the church (ἐκκλησία),⁶¹⁹ gives him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and imparts the authority to determine what is to be 'bound and loosed' on earth. Such a declaration is unique to Matthew, and speaks powerfully for a strong Petrine connection for the evangelist; here, Matthew has given Peter alone the Christ-given authority in his church.⁶²⁰ And further, Jesus describes it as *his* church (μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν), and adds that he will build the church himself, adding an extra layer of authority and importance onto Peter.⁶²¹ What is also worth noting is this Matthean terminology of binding and loosing, which draws significant attention to the Law. The terms δέω and λύω are used in later Jewish literature to refer to the authority to interpret the Law.⁶²² Matthew is thus saying that Peter (and later the disciples in 18:18) has the authority to determine the interpretation of the Torah,⁶²³ a fundamental part of the Matthean theology. This authority to bind and loose both on earth and in heaven also indicates the eternal continuity of this power.⁶²⁴ In adding this extended response to Peter's confession, Matthew is affirming Peter's leadership in the church.⁶²⁵

This relatively brief analysis of Matthew's portrayal of the disciples in light of that of Mark has demonstrated that Matthew has considerably revised Mark's portrait of the group, and significantly improved their image. This aspect of Matthew's use of Mark further supports the impact of the early church disagreements on the Gospel by demonstrating Matthew's affiliation with the leaders of the Law-abiding gospel. Matthew's amendments to the disciples are not just the hand of someone wanting to generally refine and polish a rough Markan portrait; the emphasis on

⁶¹⁹ Some suggest that it is not actually Peter on which the church is being built, but the faith which he has just proclaimed. See C. C. Caragounis, *Peter and the Rock* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1990).

⁶²⁰ R. T. France point out that it is Peter, not the entire body of disciples, which are given this authority. He also points out that this also is the case in the beginning of Acts. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 622.

⁶²¹ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 623; F. D. Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary, Volume Two* (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 574.

⁶²² E.g. En. 40:9-11; b. Sanh 113a. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 219. For more examples see the list in Keener, *Matthew*, 455, n. 25.

⁶²³ That this passage proclaims Peter's authority over Torah interpretation; Meier, 'Antioch', 67; G. Bornkamm, 'The Authority to "Bind" and "Loose" in the Church in Matthew's Gospel', in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. G. N. Stanton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 101-14; D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 473; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 219; Byrne, *Lifting the Burden*, 130; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 45.

⁶²⁴ Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 197.

⁶²⁵ Dunn, *Neither Jew nor Greek*, 250.

teaching, the emphasis on Peter, and the emphasis of the disciples' understanding of Jesus' teaching, all make it more likely that Matthew was also trying to create a narrative where the successors of the gospel were worthy of their position.

It was earlier concluded that Mark's portrayal of the disciples was likely due to his polemic against those promoting a Law-abiding gospel. Likewise, Matthew has most likely rehabilitated these figures in order to legitimise the Law-abiding tradition and their role in the future church and the eschaton. This same pattern and probable motivation is also seen in Matthew's portrayal of Jesus' family.

4.2.2 The Family of Jesus

Like the disciples, Jesus' family are improved in Matthew from Mark,⁶²⁶ and once again, the changes that Matthew has made to his source are the most telling element of this different perspective. As in Mark's Gospel, the family of Jesus only appear twice during Jesus' ministry, but Matthew's infancy narratives establish the evangelist's attitudes towards Jesus' family from early on in the narrative.

From the genealogy, which opens Matthew's Gospel, Joseph is posited as being among those descended from Abraham, setting him up positively from the beginning (1:16).⁶²⁷ His wife, Mary, is also portrayed positively as the woman foretold in Isaiah's prophecy who would borne the Messiah (1:23). When the narrative turns to the engagement of Joseph and Mary, the two are still portrayed positively. Joseph as a 'righteous man' (1:19), who was willing to let Mary go quietly rather than cause her embarrassment. When his concerns are addressed by the angel of the Lord, Joseph readily submits to the divine plan (1:24), and stays with Mary as she gives birth to Jesus. This theme of complete obedience to the will of God continues throughout Matthew's infancy narrative; after Jesus' birth, the angel of the Lord again appears to Joseph, this time instructing him to flee to Egypt, which he does readily, and awaits further instruction (2:13-14). After Herod dies, and the danger is cleared, the angel of the Lord once again appears to Joseph, who again obeys, and settles with his family in Nazareth (2:23). While Matthew focuses more on Joseph's role, Mary

⁶²⁶ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 195-96; Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 98, 103; S. C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 178-91; Goulder, *Tale of Two Missions*, 11-12; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 190-92; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 43-44. On the other hand, R. Bauckham writes that Matthew does not improve Mark's portrait. See R. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 49-50.

⁶²⁷ On this point, S. C. Carlson has suggested that Matthew establishes *Joseph's* royal lineage in his Gospel (even though he was not Jesus' father) in order to legitimise Joseph's *other* children, Jesus' brothers. See S. C. Carlson, 'The Davidic Key for Counting the Generations in Matthew 1:17,' *CBQ* 76 (2014), 665-83, 681-82.

is still implicated in this positive treatment. She is the foretold virgin who will bear Jesus, who will save people from their sins (1:21-23). These infancy narratives establish from the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, that his family have always obeyed God, and enabled God's will to be done on Earth. Nothing in the two following stories that refer to Jesus' family contradicts or even calls into question this unwavering commitment.⁶²⁸

As well as adding his infancy narrative, Matthew significantly lessens the harsh portrait of Jesus' family found in Mark's Gospel by dismantling the passages from the Markan narrative, and eliminating some particularly harsh material and direct condemnation from Jesus. This is most successfully done with the Markan sandwich of 3:19b-35, where Matthew breaks down this structured pericope. He eliminates the introductory narrative of Jesus' family that appeared in Mark 3:19b-21,⁶²⁹ so in Matthew there is no suggestion that Jesus' family thought he was beside himself, and there is no attempt to restrain him. Because his family are not even mentioned or implied, they are not at all implicated in the following passages about Beelzebul and blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (12:22-45 cf. Mark 3:22-30). In fact, the first time Jesus' family is mentioned at all during his ministry is later in Matthew 12:46-50, where he repeats Mark's narrative about Jesus' true family. By removing the crucial passages of 3:19b-21, Matthew has dismantled Mark's structural technique.⁶³⁰ Simply by eliminating these lines, Matthew's narrative has no suggestion of violence (κρατῆσαι in Mark 3:21), no implication of insanity (ἐξέστη in Mark 3:21), no comparison of Jesus' family with the Scribes, and no implication of Jesus' family being guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.⁶³¹ Instead, Matthew has turned the passages about Beelzebul and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit into additional polemics against the Pharisees (12:24, 38), who were only named as scribes in Mark.⁶³²

The narrative that Matthew has retained about Jesus' true family (12:46-50 cf. Mark 3:31-35) thus has less dramatic implications for Jesus' biological family.⁶³³ Matthew has remained true to the Markan story in 3:31-35, changing only some slight and ultimately inconsequential

⁶²⁸ That the infancy narratives set up a positive view of Jesus' family; Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 106; Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties*, 182; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 191.

⁶²⁹ It is interesting to note that Luke also omits 3:19-21.

⁶³⁰ That this was a deliberate move on Matthew's part, see Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 99; Goulder, 'Those Outside', 294; Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties*, 179. For an alternative view, see R. Bauckham, who wrote that Matthew's elimination of 3:19-b21 was a result of Matthew's conflation of sources. See Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus*, 49.

⁶³¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 191.

⁶³² Painter, *Just James*, 35.

⁶³³ That Matthew's version of the story portrays Jesus' family more positively; Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties*, 179-81; Painter, *Just James*, 35-36; Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 191-92. Not all agree and the following say this story still portrays Jesus' family poorly; D. Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 222; Beare, *Matthew*, 284-85; Bruner, *Matthew, Volume 2*, 2.522.

wording.⁶³⁴ The story is still possibly unflattering for Jesus' family, but he has dramatically lessened the harsh condemnation that Mark reserves for them. On this point, it is important to note that given the positive portrayal of Mary in the infancy narratives, it is unlikely Matthew intends to criticise her here.⁶³⁵ Sim also points out that given that Matthew has eliminated Mark 3:19-21, it is unlikely he saw or intended Matt. 12:46-50 as a negative portrait of Jesus' family.⁶³⁶ U. Luz likewise agrees that Matthew having taken away Mark 3:19-21, means that the remaining passage is not a polemic against Jesus' family.⁶³⁷

The only remaining passage that mentions Jesus' family is again taken from Mark, when Jesus is not accepted in his home town (Matt. 13:53-58 cf. Mark 6:1-6).

Mark 6:1-6	Matt. 13:53-58
¹ He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. ² And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying	⁵³ And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, ⁵⁴ and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said,
'Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands? ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Sim, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him.	'Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?' ⁵⁷ And they took offence at him.
⁴ And Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin (συγγενῶσιν),	But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honour except in his own country
and in his own house (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ).	and in his own house (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ)'.
⁵ And he could do not mighty work there, except that he laid hands upon a few sick people and healed them.	⁵⁸ And he did not do many mighty works there,
⁶ And he marvelled at their unbelief.	because of their unbelief.

Once again, Matthew has largely kept the Markan story, but one small change he makes is potentially significant. In his list of places where prophets are not honoured, Matthew has eliminated the specific reference to 'among their own kin (συγγενῆς)' (Mark 6:4). It has been suggested that this redaction is no more than Matthean redaction of Markan redundancy (Mark 6:4), and does not signal a motivation to protect Jesus' family from criticism.⁶³⁸ Additionally, Matthew has retained the reference to ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ, which still potentially, or even likely,

⁶³⁴ E.g. Given that Matthew has not referred to Jesus' family before, he has no motivation for their wanting to see Jesus. He thus adds that they wanted to speak with him (12:46). This also removes any implication that they had negative motives, as Mark has written. See Painter, *Just James*, 36; Evans, *Matthew*, 265.

On the scribal history of 12:46, which is contentious, see Hagner, *Matthew*, 358.

⁶³⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 191.

⁶³⁶ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 191.

⁶³⁷ U. Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary*, trans. J. E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 225.

⁶³⁸ Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus*, 50.

refers to Jesus' family. However, the more likely motivation for this redaction is that Matthew was once again trying to soften the criticism so evident in Mark.⁶³⁹ Sim even argues that Matthew's omission of συγγενῆς was intended as a softening of criticism, and that Matthew did not even mean to refer to Jesus' relations when he wrote ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ, because he had just made a point of eliminating them specifically.⁶⁴⁰ Thus, Sim implies that Matthew meant to exonerate Jesus' family completely. But even if Matthew did mean to imply Jesus' family, this passage is at most not flattering for them. Up to this point, Jesus' family are still seen mostly if not entirely positively. In light of Matthew's portrayal of Jesus family (and not in light of Mark's portrait), there is little in 13:53-58 that condemns them directly.⁶⁴¹ R. E. Brown suggests that even if 'in his own house' did mean to refer to his family, it is less direct and thus less of a personal attack than is found in Mark.⁶⁴²

Matthew's changes to Jesus' family are evident in his small-scale changes, as well as his big picture additions. The infancy narrative has a purely positive view of Mary and Joseph, and Matthew has at least toned down the criticism in the Markan stories of Jesus' family during his ministry. Brown writes that Matthew has made these ministry stories neutral, and that the infancy narrative has the effect of colouring these later stories about Jesus' family for an overall positive image;⁶⁴³ a marked improvement from the Markan narrative.

4.2.3 Conclusions

This discussion of the disciples and family of Jesus in Matthew has demonstrated once again that Matthew fits neatly in with the perspective of the Jerusalem Church; he has rehabilitated its members, and, in the case of the disciples, given them a legitimate foundation from which to lead the church, preach the gospel, interpret the Law, and lead the Gentile mission. For Matthew, the disciples especially, are the designated heirs and guardians of the Jesus tradition.⁶⁴⁴ Matthew, then, seems determined to establish that these figures were authorised and legitimate leaders of the early church. His motivation for doing so likely comes from Matthew's conscious standing in the debates around the Law. Matthew's rehabilitation of these figures could also come from close ties

⁶³⁹ Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 99-103; Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties*, 189.

⁶⁴⁰ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 190-91.

⁶⁴¹ C. A. Evan notes that Matthew has removed this passage from its Markan context. In Mark, this story follows successful missions on both sides of the Sea of Galilee. The contrast between these successes and the rejection by his home town is thus stark. Matthew, on the other hand, places this passage after his series of parables, dismantling the negative contrast seen in Mark. Evans, *Matthew*, 288-89.

⁶⁴² Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 100, n. 210.

⁶⁴³ Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer, and Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament*, 103.

⁶⁴⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 196.

with Peter or other leaders directly involved in the debates.⁶⁴⁵ This study has demonstrated that Matthew had disagreed with Mark on some key ideas connected to this conflict in the early church, and it is fitting that once again he would want to ‘correct’ Mark’s picture of these figures for the same reasons.

4.3 Chapter 4 Conclusions

This chapter set out to analyse Mark’s and Matthew’s treatment of the Law-abiding figures in the early church debates. It was seen that Mark’s poor treatment of the disciples builds gradually over the narrative. While the beginning of the narrative shows a positive relationship between Jesus and the Twelve, from the significant parable of the sower, the disciples begin to stumble in their roles. Mark emphasises that the disciples do not understand Jesus or his teaching, they are scared of Jesus’ power, and hinder Jesus’ mission on numerous occasions. On more than one occasion Jesus admonishes them, and as the narrative progresses towards Jerusalem, the disciples more frequently show themselves to be inadequate for their calling. This reaches a height during Jesus’ passion; Judas betrays Jesus, the rest of the disciples desert Jesus, and Peter remains, but only to thrice deny Jesus. After his resurrection, an angel at the tomb tells the women to give word to the disciples about his resurrection, but Mark writes that they told no one what they saw. The disciples then are not redeemed in Mark’s narrative. Mark’s picture of Jesus’ family is similarly negative, even more overtly so. They only appear in two pericopes, but in both stories, Mark emphasises their distance from Jesus. In the first pericope, Jesus’ family tried to restrain him, and come close to thinking Jesus was demon possessed, an accusation Jesus himself later condemns in a separate conversation with the scribes. The final part of this pericope involves Jesus saying that his real family were the crowd who were listening to him. Their second occurrence did not involve them directly, but Mark comments that Jesus was without honour in his own house and with his own kin, commenting that Jesus was unable to perform miracles in his home town.

Matthew’s treatment of these figures is very different, and he makes visible efforts to portray these figures in a more positive light. He highlights the disciples’ understanding Jesus’ teaching, highlights their presence during his ministry, adds a resurrection narrative where Jesus meet with the Eleven, and officially commissions them to make disciples of all nations. Matthew also gives Peter a lot more prominence, and Jesus explicitly says that it is on Peter that he will build his church. Matthew’s portrait of Jesus’ family is also vastly more positive than Mark’s; he begins his Gospel with an infancy narrative where Joseph and Mary are consistently portrayed as obedient to God. Matthew keeps both stories from Mark about Jesus’ family, but he consistently

⁶⁴⁵ S. Carlson’s suggestion that the genealogy in Matthew linked Joseph with royal heritage in order to benefit Joseph’s other children fits into this idea. See Carlson, ‘The Davidic Key’, 684-82.

tones down the negative aspects of these passages so that they are at most underwhelming, but not critical of Jesus' family.

The treatment of Jesus' disciples and family by both Mark and Matthew push the evangelists even closer to the Law-free and Law-abiding groups of the early church respectively. Not only do Mark and Matthew align with the different sides of the early church conflict by virtue of their theologies, but in how they portray the leaders of the Law-abiding movement. Mark portrays these leaders negatively, calling into question their understanding of Jesus' ministry, particularly in light of Jesus' Gentile mission, and his criticism of the family and disciples of Jesus can be explained by their opposition to the Law-free movement to which he belonged. Matthew fits in with the Law-abiding tradition, which formed under the leadership of Peter and James. As such, he amends the inadequacies of the disciples that Mark portrays, and puts in the words of Jesus explicit authority on which Peter and the disciples are to lead his church, and conduct the Gentile mission. This chapter has demonstrated that Mark and Matthew align with the Law-free and Law-abiding traditions of the early church not only in their theology, but in their portrayals of the historical figures associated with the Law-abiding movement, and that their portrayals were likely motivated by the conflict in the early church.

Chapter 5: Paul and the Gospels of Mark and Matthew

Up to now, the study has established that there was considerable tension and conflict between the Law-abiding and Law-free traditions in the early church and that this conflict is reflected in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew in various ways. This final chapter will look at the recent discussions of Paul and the Gospels in the context of the picture of the early church provided in this study. The past twenty years has seen a resurgence in speculation on the relationship between each of these evangelists and Paul; was Mark influenced by the Pauline tradition? And was Matthew responding to Pauline theology? This chapter will look at both of these questions and use the context of the early church to extend the current discussion on the issues.

It has been seen in previous chapters that Paul was a prominent player in the disputes in the early church; he began his ministry in Antioch, played major roles at the Jerusalem Council and the Incident at Antioch, and from there established his own very successful Law-free Gentile mission, creating and sustaining Gentile churches throughout Asia Minor and Greece. He would have had a considerable reputation in the churches he worked with, and possibly beyond these limits, thanks to his prominent role at the Jerusalem Council. However, unlike the disciples and family of Jesus, Paul was not present for Jesus of Nazareth's earthly ministry, and the canonical evangelists have not been so anachronistic as to include Paul in their story.⁶⁴⁶ As such, searching for each author's opinion on the apostle is not as simple as analysing their explicit portrayals in the text. Instead, signs of Paul's *theology* are the most accurate indicators of a Pauline influence.

The primary sources for searching for Pauline influence in the Markan and Matthean communities are Paul's letters and the texts of Mark and Matthew. Previously, such questions have been addressed by focusing on intertextuality and trying to find literary connections between the two,⁶⁴⁷ and this leads to the question of whether the evangelists would have had access to the Pauline letters. While there is no consensus as to when Paul's letters were collected or circulated,⁶⁴⁸ and while there is no strong evidence of verbal parallels between the Gospels and the Pauline letters, it is entirely possible that some Pauline epistles were collated and circulating even by the time of Mark, thus giving the evangelists some access to Pauline theology. However, it is also possible that Mark and Matthew were familiar with Pauline theology from other sources, such

⁶⁴⁶ Unlike the later author of the *Acts of John* who added Paul to the group of disciples. See Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 44, n. 93.

⁶⁴⁷ D. C. Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus: A Preliminary Intertextual Study,' *JSNT* 31 (2009), 401-22. On the varying levels of intertextuality see R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 34-45; R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 10-12.

⁶⁴⁸ For a summary see S. E. Porter, 'When and How Was the Pauline Canon Compiled? An Assessment of Theories', in *The Pauline Canon*, ed. S. E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 95-127.

as through oral tradition, or even through interaction with Pauline followers. In the absence of strong intertextual evidence, there are still tools available for searching for a connection between Paul and the Gospels. This will be undertaken here by searching for echoes of particularly Pauline ideas in these Gospels. Such echoes could take the form of terminology Paul employs in his letters, theology that is exclusively Pauline, or the arguments that Paul used in defending aspects of his gospel.

However, it is also difficult to demonstrate that different motifs and ideas were exclusively Pauline in order to search for specifically Pauline ideas in the Gospels. As K. B. Larsen speculates, other independent groups could have developed similar ideas to Paul, and Mark (and Matthew) could have gotten these ideas from non-Pauline sources,⁶⁴⁹ and this will prove to be the ultimate hurdle for questions of Paul and the Gospels. While Mark has a Law-free gospel as Paul does, and while Matthew criticises such a Law-free gospel, there is no clear indication that either evangelist had a *Pauline* Law-free gospel in mind. Despite the prominence of Paul in the New Testament, and consequently the focus on him in New Testament scholarship, the first century was home to a number of Law-free Christian communities; the Johannine community, the Christian community in Alexandria, the church in Rome, and the Hellenists are those that feature or were at least mentioned in the Christian Scriptures. All of these groups belonged under the Law-free banner, but were not Pauline. As was touched on in the first chapter of this study, Paul was not the originator of the Law-free tradition;⁶⁵⁰ he joined the Hellenist church in Antioch only after their Law-free Gentile missions were already under way. Essentially, the Law-free tradition was bigger than Paul, and there is no indication in Mark or Matthew that their Gospels were the result of or a response to a particularly Pauline theology.

Despite the unsettled questions of each Gospel's origin, these do not affect the possibility of a Pauline awareness and influence in the case of either Gospel. While a Roman provenance for Mark provides an easy scenario in which Mark could have known of Paul's letter to the church there,⁶⁵¹ had Mark been written in Palestine or Syria he still could have been exposed to Pauline ideas.⁶⁵² While an Antiochene provenance for Matthew could easily explain why he might have inherited ill feelings towards Paul, he could still maintain an anti-Pauline stance in Palestine or other parts of the Roman Empire. Though some options would explain things very readily, neither provenance for either Gospel rules out a Pauline influence.

⁶⁴⁹ Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 171.

⁶⁵⁰ Despite his claims in Galatians and elsewhere that he received his gospel directly from Christ (Gal. 1:11-12).

⁶⁵¹ On this point see Theophilus, 'The Roman Connection', 54-71.

⁶⁵² See J. Marcus, who advocates for a Mark-Paul connection and a Syrian provenance for Mark. Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 35.

5.1 Mark and Paul

This study has already established that Mark and Paul had the same ideas about Gentiles adherence to the Law. But did they have a more direct connection than has been espoused so far? Did the second evangelist know Pauline theology in some form, and can this be detected in his Gospel? Supporting a Mark-Paul connection can and has taken on varying extremes, from claiming that Mark knew the apostle's letters,⁶⁵³ or suggesting that the two moved within the same Law-free circles.⁶⁵⁴ Not only is the specific relationship between Mark and Paul open to possibilities, but the extent of Mark's conscious allusions to Paul also varies; was Mark actively trying to defend Paul in his Gospel?⁶⁵⁵ Or was Mark simply influenced by Paul?⁶⁵⁶ In opposition to this line of thought, of course, it has been argued on many occasions that Mark was merely *un*-Pauline, and so completely independent of Paul's influence.⁶⁵⁷

This present discussion does not aim to search for a historical connection between Mark and the person of Paul; instead it will be explored whether it is possible that Mark was influenced by the Pauline tradition.⁶⁵⁸ Such an influence could be detected in many forms, such as a shared provenance or some other historical connection, but such an approach is highly speculative. Instead, it is more helpful to search for Pauline ideas in Mark's Gospel. However, just sharing a belief does not equate to a direct connection. As J. T. Nielsen has argued, it must be shown that Mark was dependent on a '*specifically Pauline* interpretation' of a shared belief.⁶⁵⁹ Nielsen's stringent criterion makes sense; Mark would have to interpret a tradition in a specifically Pauline way in order for a reasonable claim that Mark was directly influenced by Paul. But more than a Pauline *interpretation* is possible in detecting a Pauline influence. If Mark were to justify or expand a mutual belief in a similar way to how Paul does, this would also strongly indicate a particularly Pauline influence on his theology. For example, given that the Law-free tradition was

⁶⁵³ For example, A. Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques: Traduction Et Commentaire* (Haute-Marne: Ceffonds, 1907); G. Volkmar, *Die Religion Jesu Und Ihre Erste Entwicklung Nach Dem Gegenwärtigen Stande Der Wissenschaft* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1857).

⁶⁵⁴ As per Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 171-72.

⁶⁵⁵ Volkmar, *Die Religion Jesu*; Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*.

⁶⁵⁶ B. W. Bacon, *Beginnings of Gospel Story: A Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Sources and Structure of the Gospel According to Mark: With Expository Notes Upon the Text: For English Readers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1909), xxvii; Bird, 'Mark', 42.

⁶⁵⁷ M. Werner, *Der Einfluss Paulinischer Theologie Im Markusevangelium: Eine Studie Zur Neutestamentlichen Theologie* (Giessen: Topelmann, 1923), 209; Kümmel, *New Testament*, 68; Kee, *Community*, 6; Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 11.

⁶⁵⁸ The distinction that J. Painter makes is useful, drawing a correlation not between Mark and Paul himself, but between Mark and what he names the 'Pauline mission' i.e. the Law-free mission to the Gentiles. Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission'.

⁶⁵⁹ J. T. Nielsen, 'The Cross on the Way to Mark', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 273-94, 274.

bigger than the Pauline mission, Mark and Paul both promoting a Law-free gospel does not on its own demonstrate a Pauline influence on Mark unless Mark demonstrates more specific parallels with how Paul interpreted, justified, or expanded his Law-free gospel.

On the basis of these criteria, it will be seen that there is no strong indication that Mark was influenced by Pauline theology. While the two share many smaller similarities and even share in the then-controversial beliefs of the Law-free gospel and a critical attitude towards the Jerusalem Church, Mark does not show any particularly Pauline influence in the way that he presents these ideas in his Gospel. It is thus entirely possible that the two arrived at their positions on the Law and the Jerusalem Church entirely independently of each other. However, this does not discount the *possibility* that Mark was influenced by Paul, but on the face of the evidence, the degree of likelihood cannot be said to be stronger than this. Mark can certainly be interpreted as Pauline *ex post facto*, that is, in retrospect – as this study has shown, the two stood close together in the division of the early church – but the evidence does not demonstrate that this was the result of a Pauline influence on Mark.

It is important to note at the outset that differences in perspective and even differences in theology do not themselves discount that Mark may have been influenced by Paul. That Mark should have known Pauline theology does not mean that the two should agree on every theological point, or that they had the same interest in different aspects of the new Christian tradition. This was highlighted by J. Marcus, who pointed out that there were marked differences even between Paul and other ‘Paulinists’ in the early church, such as the author of Luke-Acts, the authors of Colossians and Ephesians, and Ignatius of Antioch.⁶⁶⁰ These authors can be considered particularly Pauline, especially the authors of Colossian and Ephesians, who considered themselves so Pauline as to purport to write in the apostle’s name! As such, the differences between Mark and Paul do not mean that Mark was uninfluenced by Paul.⁶⁶¹

Discussion in this section will start with a brief literature review of scholarship concerned with the relationship between Paul and the Gospel of Mark. This will be followed by a discussion of the frequently noted similarities between Mark and Paul – especially their shared focus on the cross – and it will be seen that shared features that are commonly used to establish a Mark-Paul connection are inadequate for various reasons. The third part of the discussion will look to more reliable commonalities between Mark and Paul that could establish a connection, namely their mutual Law-free positions, and their demonstrated tensions with the Jerusalem Church. As outlined

⁶⁶⁰ Marcus, ‘Mark – Interpreter of Paul’, 476.

⁶⁶¹ Marcus, ‘Mark – Interpreter of Paul’, 476-77.

above, the ultimate conclusion will be that there is no particularly Pauline theology evident in Mark that could strongly indicate a Pauline influence on the second evangelist.

5.1.1 Literature

There are a growing number of scholars that draw a connection between the Gospel of Mark and the theology of Paul. The debate over whether Mark was in some way dependent on or influenced by Paul's teaching has been a contested topic for more than a century. One of the earliest suggestions of a Mark-Paul connection came from G. Volkmar in 1857.⁶⁶² Volkmar fundamentally saw the Markan Jesus as a Pauline figure, and the Markan Gospel as steeped in Pauline theological ideas, especially noting their shared idea of salvation for Gentiles.⁶⁶³ He argued that Mark had access to four letters of Paul (Romans, Galatians, and 1 and 2 Corinthians),⁶⁶⁴ and he saw Mark's Gospel not as a simple biography of the historical Jesus, but instead saw the Markan Jesus as a literary figure, who was based on various figures, including the historical Jesus, but who also was the result of much later Pauline ideas being transferred anachronistically onto the figure of Christ.⁶⁶⁵ While there are some aspects to Volkmar's argument that are not accepted in scholarship today,⁶⁶⁶ the recently revived discussion on the relationship between Mark and Paul has brought Volkmar's initial observations to light again.⁶⁶⁷

In 1923 M. Werner wrote a monograph on the subject of Mark and Paul, largely in response to the claims of Volkmar.⁶⁶⁸ Werner argued that Mark and Paul actually differed on many topics, and any similarities between the two could be explained in that they were common ground

⁶⁶² Volkmar, *Die Religion Jesu*. For discussion of Volkmar's work, see A. Vig Skoven, 'Mark as Allegorical Rewriting of Paul: Gustav Volkmar's Understanding of the Gospel of Mark', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against the Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 13-27, 25.

⁶⁶³ Volkmar argued that Mark's Gospel was in response to the anti-Gentile theology of the Book of Revelation. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 16-19.

⁶⁶⁴ Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 16.

⁶⁶⁵ For example, Volkmar saw the dining controversy of Mark 2:13-17 as a rewriting of the Incident at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14), and where the men from James are represented by the Pharisees who ask why Jesus was eating with sinners. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 22-24. Vig Skoven also points out that later scholars frequently refer to Volkmar's theory as describing Mark as an allegory of Pauline thought, even though Volkmar never used this term himself. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 21.

⁶⁶⁶ Such as his idea that Mark was written as a Gentile-positive response to the Gentile-negative Book of Revelation. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 16-18.

⁶⁶⁷ Vig Skoven points out that many aspects of Volkmar's research which were considered incredible are now considered mainstream, such as Markan priority, and seeing the Gospels as literary documents. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 26.

⁶⁶⁸ Werner, *Der Einfluss Paulinischer*, 209. One of Werner's worries about Volkmar's theory was that such a take on Mark and Paul would logically extend to seeing Jesus as a mythical figure, something Werner was keen to avoid. Vig Skoven, 'Volkmar's Understanding of Mark', 25.

for *all* Christians in the first century.⁶⁶⁹ Intermittently, Werner was more specific than this, and said that parallels between Mark and Paul were due to their common *Gentile* Christianity, but he never expanded on this point.⁶⁷⁰ Werner's position was largely accepted for a long time, but has been recently challenged, and it is now more widely accepted that Mark and Paul actually did have some sort of theological relationship.⁶⁷¹ J. Marcus wrote the key article in 2000 that revived this thesis, claiming that Paul had influenced Mark. Marcus argued that Mark's and Paul's similarities were 'peculiar emphases', notably, their emphasis on the cross, though he also briefly mentioned their dislike of Jesus' family and their Law-free stances. As such, Mark's imitation of these positions was not due to them being commonplace in early Christianity – in fact they were points of conflict – instead, Paul's influence on Mark was the more likely explanation for such themes being echoed by the evangelist.⁶⁷² Marcus argued that Mark was in the Pauline 'sphere of activity', but was not a Paulinist, nor did he belong to a Pauline 'school' (as did the authors of the deutero-Pauline letters). Mark had not studied Paul's letters, but he was not immune to the influence of the apostle.⁶⁷³ Since Marcus' article there has been a resurgence in discussion on the topic,⁶⁷⁴ and a resurgence in support for some sort of Mark-Paul connection.⁶⁷⁵

5.1.2 Frequently noted differences and similarities

It is important to acknowledge the differences that exist between Mark and Paul. A list of these differences can be extensive; one can name any characteristic of Mark's Gospel (for example, that it features John the Baptist, or that it has Jesus as a miracle worker), and point out that these do not have a Pauline basis. However, a Pauline influence on Mark does not require that Mark *only* had Paul as a source; Mark also had access to other Jesus traditions, and so the presence of non-Pauline characteristics does not discount that Mark knew Pauline theology.

⁶⁶⁹ More recently, Werner's position has been echoed by Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 11.

⁶⁷⁰ Werner, *Der Einfluss Paulinischer*, 202.

⁶⁷¹ Key texts include Fenton, 'Paul and Mark'; Goulder, 'A Pauline in a Jacobite Church'; Black, 'Christ Crucified'; W. R. Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 164-69.

⁶⁷² Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 481-82, 486-87

⁶⁷³ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 75.

⁶⁷⁴ See especially the companion volumes Wischmeyer, Sim, and Elmer, *Paul and Mark Part One* and Becker, Engberg-Pedersen, and Müller, *Mark and Paul Part Two*.

⁶⁷⁵ M. Mitchell, 'Epiphanic Evolutions in Earliest Christianity,' *ICS* 29 (2004), 183-204, 191-92; Bird, 'Mark', 52; T. Engberg-Pedersen, 'Paul in Mark 8:34-9:1: Mark on What It Is to Be Christian', in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 189-209; Nielsen, 'The Cross', 294; Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 526; Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 29-51. For an opposing view see the work of J. G. Crossley, who argues that Mark was pre-Pauline, and so un-Pauline. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel*, 47-55; Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 11, 28.

One of the frequently cited major differences between Paul and Mark is that while Paul's letters demonstrate very little interest in the words and deeds of Jesus, Mark (obviously) shows particular interest in the details of Jesus' life.⁶⁷⁶ In his letters, Paul never refers to major events in Jesus' earthly life, such as his baptism, or the events leading up to his death, and he only rarely refers to any content of Jesus' teaching. On the two occasions where Paul does cite Jesus' words (1 Cor. 7:10-11; 9:14; 11:23-26), they are not in defence of his big theological points, such as the Law or Gentile mission, but about divorce, earning a living while preaching, and the words recited at the Last Supper. Reading Paul's letters, it could be understood that, for Paul, the only significant part of Jesus' life was his death and resurrection. And even then, while Paul has incredible focus on these events, he shows no interest in the detail of how they happened. In light of this, it is sometimes argued that an account of Jesus' life like the one Mark pioneered could make little sense for a Paulinist. However, this argument has been rightly criticised. J. Marcus suggests that it is fitting that Mark would want to fill in the gaps that Paul had left,⁶⁷⁷ and J. D. G. Dunn points out that Paul, though emphasising Jesus' death, must have had some information about Jesus' life; it is hard to believe that Paul's new converts would have submitted to his gospel without knowing more about this man who was crucified and thus brought salvation, and so Paul's teaching must have included information about Jesus' earthly life and identity.⁶⁷⁸ Further, Paul's letters may imply that he knew more than he explicitly wrote about the teaching of Jesus. Paul clearly knew some Jesus' traditions (1 Cor. 7:10-11; 9:14; 11:23-27; 15), and even though he only used them occasionally, it is likely that he had a large amount of Jesus tradition from which to draw when it was needed. Nor was Paul alone in the New Testament in rarely citing Jesus' words; the other Epistles also neglect to do this.⁶⁷⁹ The lack of Jesus' teaching in the Pauline letters then, may be more a result of their genre than a reflection of the content of Paul's teaching. As such, the different perspectives that Mark and Paul take on the life of Jesus may not necessarily reflect the reality, and do not discount a Pauline influence on Mark.

⁶⁷⁶ See M. Dibelius, 'Evangelienkritik Und Christologie', in *Zur Formgeschichte Des Evangeliums* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1935), 53-4. Mark and Paul also have a mutual lack of interest in Jesus' teaching. As J. Svartvik points out, Mark often declares *that* Jesus taught, but rarely details *what* Jesus taught. Only Mark 4 and 13 gives such content Comparatively, Matthew and Luke add a lot of teaching material. Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 31.

⁶⁷⁷ Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 477.

⁶⁷⁸ J. D. G. Dunn, 'The Gospel and the Gospels,' *EvQ* 85 (2013), 291-308, 295-97.

⁶⁷⁹ E. Eve, *Behind the Gospels: Understanding the Oral Tradition* (London: SPCK, 2013), 160. For a completely different perspective see T. S. Verenna, who argues that Paul himself never believed in the historicity of Jesus in the first place, but instead saw him as an allegorical figure. See T. S. Verenna, 'Born under the Law: Intertextuality and the Question of the Historicity of the Figure of Jesus in Paul's Epistles', in *"Is This Not the Carpenter?": The Question of the Historicity of the Figure of Jesus*, ed. T. L. Thompson and T. S. Verenna (Sheffield: Equinox, 2012), 131-62.

Mark and Paul share an inordinate number of small parallels. Both emphasise the significance of faith in Jesus,⁶⁸⁰ both share a participation-based theology,⁶⁸¹ and both see Jesus as the new Adam.⁶⁸² Both consider the title ‘Son of God’ as one of considerable importance,⁶⁸³ and dislike the title ‘Son of David’.⁶⁸⁴ Both authors have similar views on the ritual cleanness of foods and even use similar terminology to express it.⁶⁸⁵ Both give prominence to the term εὐαγγέλιον,⁶⁸⁶ use the same words at the Last Supper,⁶⁸⁷ and both use Isa. 6:9-10.⁶⁸⁸ Both Mark and Paul distinguish between the flesh and the spirit,⁶⁸⁹ between the hidden and the revealed,⁶⁹⁰ and both use

⁶⁸⁰ Mark 2:5; 4:40; 5:34, 36; 9:19, 23-24; 10:52; 11:22-23; Rom. 1:16-17; 3:21-4:25; 9:30-32; 14:22-23. Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 167; H. Omerzu, ‘Paul and Mark – Mark and Paul: A Critical Outline on the History of Research’, in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 51-61, 56. Though note also Black, ‘Christ Crucified’, 184, who points this out as a difference.

⁶⁸¹ Seen in Mark’s discipleship theme and in Paul’s letters; Rom. 5:12-21; 8:12-17; 1 Cor. 15:12-28; Phil. 2:3-11. See M. Patella, *Lord of the Cosmos: Mythras, Paul, and the Gospel of Mark* (New York, London: T&T Clark, 2006), 83-87.

⁶⁸² Mark’s temptation narrative in 1:12-13; Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-2, 45-9. Marcus, ‘Mark – Interpreter of Paul’, 475 n. 11. Arguing against a shared Adam-Christ typology, O. Davidsen argues that this theology was commonly held among Hellenists. See O. Davidsen, ‘Adam-Christ Typology in Paul and Mark: Reflections on *Tertium Comparationis*’, in *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part Two: For and against the Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. E. M. Becker, T. Engberg-Pedersen, and M. Müller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 243-72.

⁶⁸³ Mark 1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 15:39; Gal. 4:4; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:3. Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 166. M. D. Goulder suggested that the concept of Jesus as the Son of God (Mark 1:1, 11; 3:11; 9:7; 12:6; 15:39) is Pauline. See Goulder, ‘Those Outside’, 295.

⁶⁸⁴ Rom. 1:3 shows that Paul knew of a tradition that called Jesus the Son of David, but his lack of use of it elsewhere shows that he did not think much of it. Mark, too, rarely takes this up, mostly in the mouths of minor characters (10:47-48; 11:10). See Fenton, ‘Paul and Mark’, 105; Goulder, ‘Those Outside’, 195; Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 166; Eve, *Behind the Gospels*, 160. J. B. Tyson has argued that this aversion to the ‘Son of David’ title is linked to the title’s Jewishness, and Mark’s and Paul’s conflict with the Jerusalem Church. Tyson, ‘Blindness of the Disciples’, 40.

⁶⁸⁵ καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα (Mark 7:19b); πάντα μὲν καθαρὰ (Rom. 14:20). The similarities between these two expression have been noted by many; Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 39; Räisänen, *Jesus, Paul and the Torah*, 145; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 458; Rescio and Walt, ‘There Is Nothing Unclean’, 70.

⁶⁸⁶ And use it to refer to the entire message of the Christian movement. E.g. Mark 1:1, 14, 15; 8:35; 13:10; 14:9; Gal. 1:6-9; Rom. 1:9, 16-17; 15:19. Mark also uses it more than the other evangelists, using it seven times (1:1, 14, 15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9, also 16:15), Matthew only four (4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13), and Luke and John not at all, and both Matthew and Luke omitted Mark’s use of the term in otherwise Markan stories (e.g. Mark 1:1 cf. Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:1-4). Dunn suggests that the term is Pauline in origin, and Mark has picked up Paul’s use of it, which he has introduced into the Gospel tradition. Matthew did not even call his account a Gospel. See Dunn, ‘Gospel and the Gospels’, 292-94. M. F. Bird highlights that Mark’s uses of the term each have a parallel of Paul’s use of the term. See Bird, ‘Mark’, 44-45.

⁶⁸⁷ Mark 14:24; 1 Cor. 11:25. E. V. Dowling looks at the two accounts of the last supper specifically, concluding that Mark did not directly use Paul’s version of the event, but that there are still close connections between the two accounts, such as the remembrance theme in Paul’s version, which Mark brings forward in his account of the woman anointing Jesus. See E. V. Dowling, ‘“Do This in Remembrance”: Last Supper Traditions in Paul and Mark’, in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 221-41. Crossley argues that Mark and Paul use the words in very different contexts; Mark in the Passover context, Paul in light of the dining issues at Corinth. See Crossley, ‘Mark, Paul’, 13.

⁶⁸⁸ Mark 4:10-12; Rom. 11:7-10. Theophilus, ‘The Roman Connection’, 57.

⁶⁸⁹ Mark 14:38; Gal. 5:16-17, where the flesh is weak in both. Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 167.

⁶⁹⁰ Mark 4:21-25; Rom. 2:28. Omerzu, ‘History of Research’, 56; see also Fenton, ‘Paul and Mark’, 97-101.

the imagery of hardened hearts.⁶⁹¹ Both believed that the new age Jesus brought was foretold in the Scriptures,⁶⁹² that Jesus was sent for the unrighteous,⁶⁹³ that his death was atoning,⁶⁹⁴ and both have recurring themes of fulfilment.⁶⁹⁵ Both believe that Jesus came for Jews first and then Gentiles,⁶⁹⁶ both blame Jews for Jesus' death,⁶⁹⁷ and both reject the importance of signs.⁶⁹⁸ Both have conservative views on the Roman state,⁶⁹⁹ attest to a woman's right to divorce men (and disagree with it),⁷⁰⁰ and only Mark and Paul mention a person named Rufus.⁷⁰¹ There is a mutual emphasis on persecution, suffering, martyrdom, and discipleship,⁷⁰² both Mark and Paul promote the virtue of endurance until the end,⁷⁰³ and contain a catalogue of similar vices.⁷⁰⁴

While the list of smaller parallels is extensive, these features alone do not attest to a Pauline influence on Mark. Many of these frequently listed similarities are present in other New Testament texts (such as the motif of fulfilment, the idea of Jesus' death as atoning, or taking the good news to the Jews then the Gentiles), and so do not attest to a Pauline influence on Mark. Further, some of the features listed are not particularly Pauline focuses (e.g. blame for Jesus' death), and so their presence in Mark cannot alone be an indication of a particularly Pauline influence. While some features *are* characteristically Pauline, they are not equally reflected in Mark; for example, the idea of Jesus as the new Adam is explicit in Paul (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49), but is not a very strong theme in Mark (only implied in 1:12-13). Similarly, while the atoning death of Christ was dominant in Paul's theology (Rom. 3:23-25), it is only rarely explicitly expressed in Mark (10:45). In these instances as well, Mark cannot be said to be a

⁶⁹¹ In Mark it is applied to the disciples, and in Paul to the Jews. (Mark 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; Rom. 11:7, 25; 2 Cor. 3:14). Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 168.

⁶⁹² Mark 1:1-15; Rom. 1:2; 3:21-22. W. Loader, 'The Concept of Faith in Paul and Mark', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 423-64, 451.

⁶⁹³ Mark 2:17; Rom. 4:15; 5:18-19.

⁶⁹⁴ Mark 10:45; Rom. 3:25; 5:8-9, 18-19; Gal. 3:13; 1 Cor. 7:23. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 475. For an alternative view, Crossley says there is no similar terminology, and that atonement ideas were possibly quite common in Christian thinking, or, he speculates, even developed by Jesus himself. See Crossley, 'Mark, Paul', 16.

⁶⁹⁵ Fulfilment of time (Mark 1:15; 2 Cor. 6:2), fulfilment of the Scriptures (Mark 1:2-3; Rom. 1:2), fulfilment of the Law (Mark 2:21-22; Rom. 8:4), the new Temple (Mark 11:17; 12:33; 2 Cor. 6:16), and the new Israel (Mark 12:9; 2 Cor. 2:16). Fenton, 'Paul and Mark', 92-97.

⁶⁹⁶ Mark 7:27-9; Rom. 1:16; 11. Fenton, 'Paul and Mark', 109-110; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 475; Omerzu, 'History of Research', 56.

⁶⁹⁷ Mark 14:1-2; 14:53-15:15; 1 Thess. 2:14-15. Eve, *Behind the Gospels*, 164.

⁶⁹⁸ Mark 8:11-12; 1 Cor. 1:22. Goulder, 'Those Outside', 295.

⁶⁹⁹ Mark 12:12-17; Rom. 13:1-7. Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 166; Omerzu, 'History of Research', 57.

⁷⁰⁰ Mark 10:10-12; 1 Cor. 7:10. Omerzu, 'History of Research', 56.

⁷⁰¹ Who could have been a member of the church in Rome; Rom. 16:13 and Mark 15:21. Theophilus, 'The Roman Connection', 61.

⁷⁰² Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 169.

⁷⁰³ Mark 13:13; Rom. 2:7.

⁷⁰⁴ Mark 7:21; Rom. 1:29; Gal. 5:19-21. There are a lot more parallels that can be drawn between Mark and Paul that were definitely common to Christianity generally, for example, the use of 'Christ' as a title for Jesus, the theme of the coming kingdom of God, the idea of Jesus as God's son, etc. These have not been listed here.

reflection of Pauline thought. Others could be attributed to coincidence (e.g. mention of Rufus), and some are too small to have been a significant part of either author's theology (e.g. views on the Roman state). Thus overall, these smaller similarities, while noteworthy, do not require a Pauline connection with Mark necessary to explain their mutual existences.

It is frequently noted in the relevant literature that Mark and Paul share a common theology of the cross,⁷⁰⁵ and some, including Marcus, have chosen to focus on this aspect to demonstrate a connection between the two.⁷⁰⁶ That Mark and Paul both hold the crucifixion in great significance is evident. Paul constantly talks of the cross as the centre of his faith, recalling it in his short summaries of the Christian gospel, and it features heavily in his ideas of salvation.⁷⁰⁷ In Mark's Gospel, this focus can be said to be expressed in his narrative. The passion is the most detailed account of any event in the Markan Jesus' earthly life, and Mark foreshadows it from early in the Gospel;⁷⁰⁸ Jesus repeatedly predicts and points to his own death,⁷⁰⁹ and so Mark ensures the entire Gospel is looking towards his crucifixion.⁷¹⁰ And, of course, M. Kähler's famous description of Mark as a passion narrative with an extended introduction is still appropriate.⁷¹¹ In being so focused on the cross, and by having the crucifixion as a climax to his entire narrative, Mark is said to bear a striking resemblance to Paul's theology.⁷¹² Marcus argues that this focus on the cross was unique to Paul, as indicated by evidence of opposition to Paul's cross-centred theology in his own letters.⁷¹³ This is also reflected, he argues, in the passion accounts of the other evangelists, where the crucifixion is present and dominant, but toned down.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁵ J. Miller, 'The Literary Structure of Mark: An Interpretation Based on 1 Corinthians 2:1-8,' *ExpT* 106 (1995), 296-99, 297; Black, 'Christ Crucified'; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul'; Mitchell, 'Epiphanic Evolutions in Earliest Christianity', 192; Svartvik, 'Matthew and Mark', 31-32; Bird, 'Mark', 39-43; Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 45; Svartvik, 'East Is East', 174.

⁷⁰⁶ Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 479-81; also Black, 'Christ Crucified', 184-206; Nielsen, 'The Cross', 273-94.

⁷⁰⁷ E.g. 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; Gal. 6:12-15; Phil. 2:6-11.

⁷⁰⁸ How early this starts is debatable. C. K. Rothschild suggests that Mark may even be anticipating the crucifixion as early as 1:9-11, with his use of ἀγαπητός (beloved); Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 45. J. R. Donahue sees the crucifixion shadowed in the temptation narrative of Mark 1:12-13. Donahue, 'Setting of Mark's Gospel', 11. And J. Marcus points out Mark's opening reference to Isaiah in Mark 1:2-3, a passage which itself talks about a redemptive act of war, is already a reference to Jesus' death and resurrection in Jerusalem. J. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 46.

⁷⁰⁹ 2:20; 3:6; 6:17-29; 10:38-39; 12:1-9; 12:12; 14:8, 18-20, 22-24.

⁷¹⁰ Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 46.

⁷¹¹ M. Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic Biblical Christ*, trans. C. E. Braaten (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1896, 1998).

⁷¹² Bird goes so far as to say that Mark was written as an apology for the cross, a purpose he shared with Paul. Bird, 'Mark', 43.

⁷¹³ 1 Cor. 1:18, 23; 4:8-13; Gal. 5:11; Phil. 3:18.

⁷¹⁴ Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 482-84.

Marcus also argues that Mark and Paul do not just share a focus on the cross, but interpret it similarly; both see it as an apocalyptic event,⁷¹⁵ both still see the risen Jesus as the crucified one,⁷¹⁶ and both acknowledge the controversy of a crucified messiah.⁷¹⁷ Others, too, have pointed out that both Mark and Paul highlight the weakness of the crucifixion whilst seeing it as a powerful event.⁷¹⁸ Many other parallels have been drawn between Mark and Paul as to *how* they interpret the crucifixion. For example, Jesus' death is central to Paul's salvation theology,⁷¹⁹ and this is reflected (to a lesser extent) in Mark.⁷²⁰ Both also see God as the ultimate agent behind the cross,⁷²¹ and both have a lesser emphasis on resurrection, though it is still important.⁷²² Both see Jesus' death as a turning point between ages,⁷²³ and it has even been suggested that both implicitly compare the event with a Roman triumphal procession.⁷²⁴ Interestingly, D. C. Allison argues that the entire Markan passion narrative can be constructed from Paul's letters alone.⁷²⁵

As frequently as this major similarity is used to connect Mark with Paul, this is not a strong example upon which to build such a case. Most importantly because the cross was common in first century Christianity, and is found in focus in all the canonical Gospels. The teaching of the cross is seen in many different Christian texts,⁷²⁶ features in pre-Pauline Eucharistic and confessional traditions,⁷²⁷ as well as in polemics against Christianity for its focus on the cross.⁷²⁸ Further, other canonical Gospels share Mark's apocalyptic imagery at the cross, even adding to it.⁷²⁹ Marcus claims that the presence of resurrection narratives in the later Gospels tones down the significance of the crucifixion, but this is a weak argument to emphasise the mutual stance of Paul and Mark on the topic.⁷³⁰ While the resurrection narratives can be said to have the effect of detracting from the drama of the crucifixion, this does not seem to have been the intention of any of the evangelists, who used their resurrection narratives for other major purposes. As such the

⁷¹⁵ Mark 15:33; 1 Cor. 1-2. Highlighted also by Black, 'Christ Crucified', 201.

⁷¹⁶ Mark 16:6; 1 Cor. 2:23; 2:2; Gal. 3:1.

⁷¹⁷ Mark 14:65b; Gal 5:11; 1 Cor. 1:23. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 479-81.

⁷¹⁸ Mark 15:31-32; 1 Cor. 2:8; 2 Cor. 8:9; 13:4; Phil. 2:5-11. Bird, 'Mark', 42-43; see also Fenton, 'Paul and Mark', 101-03; U. Luz, 'Theologia Crucis Als Mitte Der Theologie Im Neuen Testament,' *ET* 34 (1974), 116-41.

⁷¹⁹ E.g. Rom. 3:21-26; 5:9-10; Gal. 3:13-14.

⁷²⁰ Mark 10:45; 14:36. See Nielsen, 'The Cross', 290-93.

⁷²¹ Mark 8:31; 9:31; 14:21; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2:1-5. Black, 'Christ Crucified', 201-02.

⁷²² Rothschild's description of Mark's Gospel as 'not a "life" of Jesus, but a "death" of Jesus' is apt. Rothschild, 'Faithlessness of Eyewitnesses', 45.

⁷²³ Mark: 15:33, 38 cf. Gal. 1:4; 6:14; 1 Cor. 2:7-9. Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 475; Bird, 'Mark', 42.

⁷²⁴ Mark 15:20b-21 cf. 2 Cor. 4:9; Col. 2:15. Bird, 'Mark', 41-42.

⁷²⁵ D. C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (London: SPCK, 2010), 392-423. Similarly, C. C. Black points out that the information about Jesus in 1 Cor. 9:5, 14; 11:23-25; 15:3-7; Gal. 1:19; 4:4 is all reflected in Mark; Black, 'Christ Crucified', 184.

⁷²⁶ E.g. Acts 2:23-26; 4:10; 1 Pet. 2:24; Heb. 12:2.

⁷²⁷ 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Phil. 2:8.

⁷²⁸ Justin, *Dial.* 32; *Alexamenos Graffito*. Bird, 'Mark', 39.

⁷²⁹ Esp. Matt. 27:51-52; also Luke 23:44-45.

⁷³⁰ Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 482-84.

resurrection narratives cannot be said to have been put in place with the *purpose* of detracting from the crucifixion. The other features of the Gospels which Marcus claims detract from the importance of the crucifixion – lessening Jesus’ distress in Gethsemane, and emphasising Jesus’ control of the situation – can easily be attributed to refining the Markan Gospel generally in a way that emphasises reverence for Christ.⁷³¹ None of these aspects can be attributed to a desire to lessen the effect of the cross in the narrative. Finally, Paul’s troubles with proclaiming a crucified Messiah were, likewise, not unique to him. The Christian teaching of the cross would have been shameful and problematic in any part of the ancient world,⁷³² and so the controversy of the cross was by no means a uniquely Pauline idea.

A shared emphasis on the cross, then, does not alone indicate a Pauline influence on Mark. The motif was too widespread in the early church for this theme to show a certain Pauline influence. Of course, it is entirely possible that the other evangelists, and the following Christian history, inherited this central theme of the cross from Mark and Paul, but this can only be speculation. The lack of contemporary texts for Paul and Mark make this impossible to know for sure. So, while Marcus’ advocacy of a Mark-Paul connection is still possible idea, he has not used the strongest or most effective example to demonstrate it.

5.1.3 More notable similarities and differences

Instead of the cross and smaller parallels between Mark and Paul, possibly more indicative similarities lie in the topics discussed at length in this study; the Law-free gospel, and tension with the leaders of the Jerusalem Church.

An area for which Paul definitely received criticism and ostracism is his belief and evangelisation of a Law-free gospel for Gentiles. The first chapter of this study detailed the journey of the Law-free gospel from the Hellenists into the second century, and it was seen that, although the Law-free gospel eventually became the norm, in the earliest church this was a position which caused considerable tension with the Jerusalem Church, and which received some antagonistic opposition on multiple fronts and occasions. Even after Paul’s death, the Law-free gospel was not accepted by the Law-abiding groups in the early church, and so the position remained controversial into the Gospel era. The second chapter of this study highlighted how Mark, written within a decade of Paul’s death, also displays a clear advocacy of a Law-free gospel for Gentiles.⁷³³ Given

⁷³¹ Marcus, ‘Mark – Interpreter of Paul’, 482-84.

⁷³² See M. Hengel, *Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (London: SCM, 1977). Also on this point see Crossley, ‘Mark, Paul’, 17.

⁷³³ This commonality is also frequently highlighted. See Goulder, ‘Those Outside’, 295; Bird, ‘Mark’, 52; Sim, ‘Matthew’s Use of Mark’, 186; Larsen, ‘Pauline Halakah’, 169-87; Loader, ‘Faith’, 461; Painter,

their mutual positions on what was clearly a controversial issue, it is quite possible that their shared stance on a Law-free gospel could indicate a Pauline influence on Mark. The issue was a point of controversy, was not universally held by the early church, and Matthew's changes to Mark on this very topic indicate again that Mark's view was not merely adapted without protest; the topic of Gentile adherence to the Law was a contentious and continuing issue. More so than a shared focus on the cross, a shared view on the Law-free Gentile mission would be a much more effective case for demonstrating a connection between Mark and Paul.

However, there are also noticeable absences of key Pauline themes which relate directly to his theology of the Law-free gospel. For example, Paul's famous theology of righteousness by faith alone (Rom. 3:23-25) was a significant aspect of his Law-free theology, and this is not recalled in Mark at all. Such theology was characteristically Pauline and so its absence is conspicuous. Another notable difference is in the absence of Pauline justifications for a Law-free gospel. For example, in his letters Paul argues that God's promise to Abraham was the foundation of faith.⁷³⁴ This idea of righteousness through Abraham is also completely absent in Mark's narrative. Reference to either of these in Mark, or similar Pauline arguments about the Law, would have been clear signals that Mark inherited his Law-free theology from Paul himself.

It is possible that these differences are accounted for by a difference in genre; while Paul was writing letters that directly addressed and explained theological issues, Mark's primary objective was writing about the life of Jesus. As such, perhaps fundamental theological ideas were not important to Mark, or perhaps justifying the Law-free gospel was not Mark's intention. Undoubtedly Mark and Paul express their theologies in different ways; instead of defending the Law-free gospel theologically, as Paul had done, Mark instead expresses his Law-free stance by having Jesus himself question the ritual practices of the Law.⁷³⁵ There are of course other aspects of Paul's theology of the Law that do not feature in Mark,⁷³⁶ but it is unreasonable for Mark to embody *all* aspects of Pauline theology on the Law. Those noted above, however, are significant because of how foundational they were to Paul's understanding of salvation, and it is evident from other aspects of Mark's narrative that these ideas could easily have fit in with other ideas that Mark

'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 535-36. The two also possibly share more than the ultimate conclusion that Gentiles did not have to abide by the Torah. Many have pointed out the linguistic parallels between Mark 7:19b and Rom. 14:20 (Καθαρίζον πάντα τὰ βρώματα in Mark 7:19b; πάντα μὲν καθάρᾳ in Rom. 14:20), which could indicate a direct influence. Similarly, the language in Mark 13:9-10, about proclaiming good news to the nations, has also been claimed as having Pauline 'language and sequence' (echoing Rom. 10:18). However these linguistic parallels are not strong, and may be purely coincidental. They do not necessarily indicate that Mark knew Pauline theology. See Incigneri, *Gospel to the Romans*, 297-98.

⁷³⁴ And so followed the irrelevance of circumcision. Rom. 4:1-25; Gal. 3:6-29.

⁷³⁵ K. B. Larsen has suggested that Mark, as a second or third generation Christian, was keen to give Jesus-given authority to earlier Christian ideas. Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 187.

⁷³⁶ Such as his complicated explanations for why the Law was given in the first place; Gal. 3:17-29.

has worked into his Gospel. For example, just as the Markan Jesus explicitly taught about atonement (10:45), and faith (2:5; 4:40; 11:22-25), could he not have also spoken about salvation by faith? Just as Jesus spoke about David (2:25) and Moses (10:3-5) in relation to the Law, could he not also have taught about Abraham? A difference in genre, then, does not entirely account for these absent Pauline concepts in Mark.

All this indicates that there is nothing specifically Pauline evident in Mark's Law-free gospel. Although they share a position on the issue, it cannot be said that they have an identical theology on the subject, and it is entirely possible that Mark and Paul both had separate and independent Law-free gospels.

This shared belief between the two figures does not then necessarily indicate a connection. Other explanations could suffice for why a Law-free gospel was a common feature. It is possible that the two had a mutual source, which they used independently. For example, if the historical Jesus laid down the Law-free Gospel, then this issue would hardly count as a Pauline influence on Mark. But as has been established, the historical Jesus likely did not break with the Mosaic Law, and so the Mark-Paul parallels on this topic become more significant. On this point, J. Painter argues that if Mark did not get his position on the Law-free mission to the Gentiles from the historical Jesus, the only alternative is that Mark 7:19b reflects the Pauline mission.⁷³⁷ However, such a conclusion need not be drawn from these factors alone. Paul was not the only bearer of a Law-free Christian tradition. There is evidence that the Law-free tradition was larger than Paul. When Paul wrote to the Law-free church at Rome, he had not been there before, and so it was established independently of him. So too the Johannine tradition was a separate community from the Pauline missions and was probably Law-free in the same sense that Paul and Mark were (John 1:17).⁷³⁸ It must also be remembered that the Hellenists had started a Law-free Gentile mission before Paul, and the fruits of these missions might also have given rise to Law-free communities outside of the Pauline sphere of influence. The Law-free mission, then, was bigger than the Pauline tradition, and Mark and Paul do not share a particular interpretation of this fundamental idea. As such, it must be conceded that this shared feature between Mark and Paul again cannot confirm a Pauline influence on Mark.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁷ Painter, 'Mark and the Pauline Mission', 535-36.

⁷³⁸ S. Pancaro outlines the complex relationship between John and the Law, and ultimately argues that in John the Law ends with Christ. S. Pancaro, *The Law in the Fourth Gospel: The Torah and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus, Judaism and Christianity According to John* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 83.

⁷³⁹ This conclusion is also reached by Larsen, who argues that although the parallels on the Law in Mark 7:1-23 and the Pauline letters are numerous, there is not enough that is exclusive about them that would indicate a connection. Larsen, 'Pauline Halakah', 186-87.

Another area which could indicate a Mark-Paul connection is their mutual tension with the members of the original Jerusalem Church.⁷⁴⁰ The first chapter of this study demonstrated that Paul had several unfriendly encounters with either the leaders of the church themselves, or with delegates sent from them. James and Peter were the reason Paul was defeated at Antioch, and they were possibly also behind later anti-Pauline efforts that continued even after Paul's death. It has also been seen that Mark's critique of the disciples and family of Jesus was most likely polemical in nature, and served to criticise these historical figures. This is an aspect of Mark and Paul that was also controversial and not customarily held. The portrayal of Jesus' family and especially the disciples is significantly improved by Matthew, and Luke, too, refines the harsh aspects of these characters, while later traditions testify to how revered these early figures were.

If this issue was an indicator of Mark's connection with Paul, it also highlights how significant this connection would have been. If Mark took up a critique of the disciples because of their critique of Paul, then Mark was not only influenced by Paul; he was implicitly but actively defending him. And furthermore, perhaps by denying the disciples a post-resurrection encounter, Mark is promoting the worthiness of Paul, who himself claimed to have received one.

However, there are some differences on this point. While both Mark and Paul demonstrate tension with these figures, Mark was more critical of the disciples and Jesus' family than Paul ever was. Paul did not discount their credibility as leaders, only insisting that he was as good as they (2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11), and insisting that he had their cooperation and support (Gal. 2:9-10). And yet Mark's treatment of them is fundamentally negative; while they start off in a hopeful way, they consistently do not understand Jesus, and ultimately abandon him, failing to meet him in Galilee after his resurrection. In the entire Markan narrative, the disciples are never redeemed. However, there are some explanations that can account for this disparity. During Paul's lifetime, it is likely that he hoped for reconciliation with the Jerusalem Church, or at least an acceptance from them. This is demonstrated primarily in his consistent efforts to gather a worthy collection for the poor (Rom. 15:25-32; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9). As discussed in the first chapter of this study, there is no proof that this collection was ever taken to Jerusalem, but at least in Paul's letters, its presence indicates that he was hoping to reconcile with Peter, James, and the mother church more generally. This would also explain why Paul never explicitly criticised these figures in his letters,⁷⁴¹ despite the issues they caused for him. Mark's increased negativity on these figures could be explained by the time of his writing i.e. after Paul's death. Once he knew that Paul was never accepted by

⁷⁴⁰ Mark 3:20-35; 8:17-21; Gal. 2:6-14 cf. 2 Cor. 11:4-6, 22-23; 12:11. See especially Sim, 'Family and Disciples', 73-99; noted also by Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 164; Marcus, 'Mark – Interpreter of Paul', 487.

⁷⁴¹ For example, deferring blame to a third party for the Law-abiding stance at Jerusalem; Gal. 2:4.

Jerusalem, he would have been freer to openly condemn and criticise these figures. As such, this disparity between Mark and Paul does not discount a connection between the two.

It is also important to note that Mark's poor portrayal of the disciples and Jesus' family is never done in explicit connection with the Law, as Paul did in Gal. 2:11-14.⁷⁴² Jesus' family are condemned generally, but never in the context of the Gentile mission, and whilst the disciples arguably are resistant to Jesus' moves to a Gentile mission (Mark 6:51-53; 8:17-21), this is a really subtle inference and cannot be said to dominate Mark's portrayal of the disciples and family of Jesus. This seems to be a significant disparity; if the Jerusalem disciples opposed and criticised Paul for his Law-free gospel, and this was the reason for Mark's polemic, then why did Mark not more explicitly criticise the apostles for their Law-abiding stance? Once again, there is nothing in Mark's account that suggests a specifically Pauline influence on his portrayal of the disciples, and once again, this shared characteristic, while a point of controversy, fails to provide stringent proof of a Pauline theology in Mark.

This potential indicator of a distinctly Pauline influence on Mark once again falls through when non-Pauline branches of Christianity also demonstrate tension with the family and disciples of Jesus. In the New Testament, such an attitude is also seen in the Gospel of John. At the wedding of Cana, Jesus reprimands his mother (2:4), and John is explicit that Jesus' brothers did not believe in him (7:5).⁷⁴³ While the relationship with Jesus' mother is arguably repaired later in the gospel (19:26-27), the brothers are not seen again after their disbelief in Jesus.⁷⁴⁴ Further, John does not give the most prominent discipleship role to Peter, but to the anonymous beloved disciple. As such, Paul and Mark's shared tension with the Jerusalem Church cannot conclusively be said to demonstrate a distinctly Pauline influence; once again, it is perfectly possible that Mark and Paul arrived at these conclusions separately.⁷⁴⁵

But there are some final notable differences in relation to the key issues of the Law and the Jerusalem Church that are worth highlighting. A significant disparity between Mark and Paul is

⁷⁴² Pointed out by Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 74.

⁷⁴³ J. C. Campbell argues that Mary's portrayal is positive, but the brothers' is negative. See J. C. Campbell, *Kinship Relations in the Gospel of John* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2007), 26-66.

⁷⁴⁴ R. Bauckham takes the acceptance of Mary at the cross as an acceptance of the entire biological family, but this interpretation goes beyond the evidence in the text. Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus*, 52.

⁷⁴⁵ Telford, *Theology of Mark*, 165. It is interesting to note that three of the Law-free movements whose writings have survived in the canon (Paul, Mark, and John) all demonstrate a tension with the Jerusalem Church. It is an intriguing question as to whether differences over ideas of the Law were consistently the cause of such disagreement. And if so, why did Luke's Law-free community not demonstrate the same negativity? It is also interesting to ponder whether how many of the Law-free communities in the first century disliked the original disciples.

that Mark does not take up specific problems and controversies that plagued Paul's ministry. For example, Paul's letters to the Galatians outlines problems with the issues of circumcision and this is explicitly brought up in Mark.⁷⁴⁶ This is especially notable if Mark was writing to defend Paul from opposition in the Law-abiding tradition. Several explanations can be ventured. Perhaps these issues had been resolved by the time Mark had written his Gospel. Or perhaps Mark saw these issues as exclusive to specific communities, and so not of concern to his Gospel. Or, perhaps Mark did not know the specific Pauline letters that dealt with this issue. Further, if Paul was an important figure for Mark, he has completely avoided talking about some other key Pauline themes. For example, Mark's lack of resurrection narrative means that he does not give heed to the glory of Jesus' resurrection as Paul had done; though Paul spoke of the centrality of the resurrection,⁷⁴⁷ Mark's resurrection narrative is completely lacking in any joyous reflection of the centrality of this event. Similarly, while the idea of life in the Spirit was a significant and recurring theme for Paul,⁷⁴⁸ it is barely mentioned in the Markan Jesus' teaching.

5.1.4 Conclusions

To conclude, then, none of the comparisons analysed in this study indicate a sure connection between Paul and Mark. While the two share a number of smaller parallels, and even have some points of controversy in common (as Marcus highlighted), none of these demonstrates that Mark's theology was influenced by Paul's own distinctive theology. While it is possible that Paul has influenced Mark on these points, it is just as likely that they both reached their positions independently of each other. My conclusion, then, is somewhere between that of M. Werner and J. Marcus; Mark and Paul can and should be grouped together in general *Law-free* Christianity, but there is no strong evidence of a direct influence or connection, even though the scenario remains a distinct possibility.

5.2 Matthew and Paul

Turning now to Matthew. As has been demonstrated in the study thus far, Matthew's ideas of Gentiles and the Law stand in contrast to those of Paul, instead aligning more neatly with those of the apostles in the Jerusalem Church. In light of their contrasting views on these issues, much has been speculated about whether Matthew and Paul can be considered theologically aligned or whether they stood in tension with each other. Discussion in this area tends to be grouped into three options; either Matthew was pro-Pauline, un-Pauline, or anti-Pauline. But these categories are difficult, and there are significant variations within each one. To say that Matthew was pro-Pauline

⁷⁴⁶ Bird, 'Mark', 52.

⁷⁴⁷ Rom. 1:4; 6:5; Phil. 2:9-11; 3:10-11. Black, 'Christ Crucified', 184.

⁷⁴⁸ 1 Cor. 2:10-16; 12:3-13; Gal. 3:2-6, 14.

can mean that Matthew was actively defending Paul, or that Matthew was only theologically aligned with Paul. To say Matthew was un-Pauline can mean that Matthew did not know about Paul at all, or that he did but was uninterested. To say that Matthew was anti-Pauline can mean both that the two were theologically in tension, or that Matthew was consciously criticising Paul. These categories are then confusing and unhelpful. As such, the question being asked in this discussion is more specific; was Matthew criticising Pauline theology in his Gospel? Such a question is deceptively simple, and many points need to first be established; were Matthew and Paul theologically opposed?

Discussion in this section will begin with a brief summary of the major literature, move on to establish foundational matters, such as whether Matthew would have known about Paul, and whether he would have known Paul's letters, and then there will be an in-depth look at key texts sometimes put forward as demonstrating an anti-Pauline attitude. The analysis in this discussion will demonstrate that there is no strong evidence that Matthew was intentionally criticising a Pauline theology in his Gospel. While Matthew clearly disagrees with a Law-free theology, and while some Matthean passages can thus be seen to stand in tension with Pauline theology, there is no strong evidence that a critique of Paul specifically was the evangelist's intent. As with Mark, a retrospective analysis of Matthew can be said to be showing differences and oppositional ideas to Pauline theology – and this is fitting with the picture of the church provided in this study – but this cannot confidently be attributed to a consciously anti-Pauline attitude in Matthew's Gospel.

5.2.1 Literature

S. G. F. Brandon, in a small but dedicated discussion in his 1957 book on the fall of Jerusalem, was one of the first to suggest that Matthew was critical of Paul.⁷⁴⁹ Brandon's argument was primarily that Matthew's prominence of Peter did not arise from Peter's own prominence (as he denied Peter had such authority); instead it originated from a Matthean attempt to counter the influence of Paul.⁷⁵⁰ Brandon argued that alongside this attempt, Matthew contained 'thinly veiled' anti-Pauline polemics. Firstly in Matt. 5:17-19, where the text attacked a Pauline Law-free gospel, and secondly in the parable of the tares (13:24-30, 36-43), which Brandon claimed was about Pauline Christians being weeded out at the divine judgement, even going so far as to claim that the original text had mentioned Paul by name, but later textual corruption changed the identity of this enemy to the devil (13:39).⁷⁵¹ Brandon thus saw Matthew and Peter as being on opposite sides of the church to

⁷⁴⁹ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 232-36.

⁷⁵⁰ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 233.

⁷⁵¹ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 234-35.

Paul.⁷⁵² Brandon's arguments were later strongly critiqued by W. D. Davies in his monograph on the Sermon on the Mount.⁷⁵³ Davies fundamentally denied that Matthew and Paul were at opposite ends of early Christian ideas, highlighting their shared ideas of the Law-free Gentile mission.⁷⁵⁴ Davies focused on the three areas which Brandon had isolated as demonstrating anti-Pauline attitudes. Firstly, Davies denied that Matt. 5:17-19 contradicted Pauline teaching. The only part he concedes *might* be construed as anti-Pauline is the reference to being called 'least' (ἐλάχιστος) in the Kingdom of Heaven, which Davies says might be a reference to 1 Cor. 15:9, where Paul calls himself least among disciples. But he argued that this is only possible if the rest of the passage is anti-Pauline, which he denies.⁷⁵⁵ Secondly, Davies swiftly denies the anti-Paulinism of the parable of the tares, pointing out the complete lack of textual evidence.⁷⁵⁶ Finally, he denies that Peter's prominence is a result of countering Paul, arguing that there was no anti-Pauline polemic in any of Matthew's Petrine additions and that Peter's authority is not at all denied by Paul himself.⁷⁵⁷ As such, he argues that claims of anti-Paulinism in Matthew (in Brandon and elsewhere) were 'grossly exaggerated',⁷⁵⁸ arguing instead that Matthew and Paul had a common understanding of Jesus' words.⁷⁵⁹ The position Davies espoused came to be widely accepted in scholarship, and the anti-Paulinism of Matthew went largely unsupported while the alignment of Matthew and Paul became the dominant idea, preventing other scholars from highlighting the distance between Matthew and Paul. This is seen in the works of J. P. Meier,⁷⁶⁰ G. H. Mohrlang,⁷⁶¹ H. D. Betz,⁷⁶² R. T. France,⁷⁶³ G. Luedemann,⁷⁶⁴ U. Luz,⁷⁶⁵ and G. N. Stanton,⁷⁶⁶ all of whom deny that Matthew and Paul were at odds with each other.

⁷⁵² Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 232.

⁷⁵³ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*.

⁷⁵⁴ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 325.

⁷⁵⁵ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 334-36.

⁷⁵⁶ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 336.

⁷⁵⁷ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 336-40. Davies concedes towards the end of his argument that *if* one was to admit an anti-Pauline attitude in Matthew, this would mean conceding that Matthew was attempting to counter possibly the most important figure in the early church. Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 340.

⁷⁵⁸ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 333.

⁷⁵⁹ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 366.

⁷⁶⁰ Meier holds that Matthew and Paul were different, but also very similar. He highlights their similarities, and concludes that Matthew and Paul could have worked together on a Gentile mission. Meier, 'Antioch', 62-63.

⁷⁶¹ Mohrlang studied the theologies of Matthew and Paul comparatively and concludes that they are different, but he does not venture to say what Matthew thought of Paul, only emphasising that the two should be seen as complementary in modern scholarship. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 132.

⁷⁶² Betz argued that anti-Pauline passages (5:17-19; 7:13-27) were pre-Matthean tradition and so do not reflect the opinion of the evangelist. H. D. Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 20-21, 154-57.

⁷⁶³ France argued that Matthew likely knew Paul, but was perfectly happy with the heavy influence Paul was having on his community. France, *Matthew*, 111.

⁷⁶⁴ Luedemann's monograph specifically dedicated to opposition to Paul in Jewish Christianity did not even discuss Matthew. Luedemann, *Opposition to Paul*.

⁷⁶⁵ Luz argues that Matthew and Paul disagreed on some key areas and would not have been friends, but Matthew contained no explicitly anti-Pauline polemic. Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, 146-53.

This prevailing wisdom has been questioned recently, and the central player in the renewal of this debate has been D. C. Sim. In several publications spanning nearly two decades,⁷⁶⁷ Sim has attempted to resurrect Brandon's thesis, though with different arguments.⁷⁶⁸ Sim has argued that Matthew would have been aware of Pauline theology, and would have vehemently disagreed with his different stance on the Law.⁷⁶⁹ As such, the evangelist addressed it directly in his Gospel, condemning it on all occasions. This view of the tension between Paul and Matthew fits in with Sim's overall picture of a factionalised church in conflict, and he takes Matthew's anti-Paulinism to its fullest extent. According to Sim, Matthew was an active participant in the early church dispute, and was engaged in a 'bitter and sustained polemic against Paul himself'.⁷⁷⁰ Not only did Matthew disagree with Paul, Sim insists that, according to Matthew, Paul and his followers were destined for eternal punishment at the divine judgement.⁷⁷¹ Sim points to several passages in Matthew which he has argued on several occasions were intended by Matthew as anti-Pauline statements, and which demonstrate the harsh perception of Pauline Christianity which Matthew held. Firstly Matt. 5:17-19, which Sim argues is not only an affirmation of the Law-abiding gospel of the Matthean community, but an attack on the Pauline Law-free gospel.⁷⁷² This anti-Pauline attitude is continued in the group of sayings in Matt. 7:13-27, but especially in 7:21-23, where the lawless (ἀνομία) are rejected by Jesus at the divine judgement.⁷⁷³ Next, Sim argues that the parable of the tares (13:24-30, 36-43) represents Matthew's view of the Christian community, in which the tares (Pauline Christians) will be weeded out at the judgement, when they will be thrown into the fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁷⁷⁴ Sim also sees a consciously anti-Pauline sentiment in Jesus' praise of Peter in Matt. 16:17-19, which Sim says draws verbal parallels to Paul's own claims about receiving the gospel (Gal. 1:12, 16-17; 1 Cor. 10:4c) and so intentionally disputes Paul's authority.⁷⁷⁵ Finally, Sim argues that the final commission in Matthew (28:16-20) is also intended as an anti-Pauline passage, whereby Matthew denies Paul's idea of a two-fold

⁷⁶⁶ Stanton's oft-cited suggestion that rather than being anti-Pauline or pro-Pauline, Matthew was simply non-Pauline. G. N. Stanton, *Studies in Matthew and Early Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 314.

⁷⁶⁷ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 199-211; Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism'; Sim, 'Matthew 7.21-23'; Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition'; Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus'; Sim, 'Conflict in the Canon'; D. C. Sim, 'The Reception of Paul and Mark in the Gospel of Matthew', in *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part One: Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. O. Wischmeyer, D. C. Sim, and I. J. Elmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 589-615.

⁷⁶⁸ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 776.

⁷⁶⁹ Sim, 'Reception', 592.

⁷⁷⁰ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 777.

⁷⁷¹ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 213.

⁷⁷² Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 206-08.

⁷⁷³ Sim, 'Matthew 7.21-23', 326.

⁷⁷⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 203-04.

⁷⁷⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 200-03; also Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 411-17.

mission, where he leads the Gentile mission, instead commissioning only one gospel, led by the disciples.⁷⁷⁶

Sim's arguments have garnered some attention, and have found different degrees of agreement and disagreement. Sim has found some support in the works of G. Thiessen and E. K. C. Wong, who both have added to his arguments in small ways.⁷⁷⁷ B. L. White has argued that while Matthew and Paul stood in tension over the issue of the Gentile mission, Matthew was not trying to criticise Paul.⁷⁷⁸ D. J. Harrington has said that while Sim's work may not persuade everyone, it should cause scholars to re-think tendencies to harmonise the canonical texts.⁷⁷⁹ J. Zangenberg and P. Foster have individually suggested that Matthew was not aware of Pauline theology, and by implication then could not have been consciously criticising Paul.⁷⁸⁰ One of Sim's main adversaries on this topic is J. Willitts, who has explicitly critiqued Sim on a couple of occasions, disputing the foundations of his arguments. Willitts' disputes with Sim do not take place on the basis of anti-Pauline passages in Matthew, but in his basic picture of the dispute in the early church. Willitts concedes that if Sim's picture of a church divided over the relevance of the Law was sound, it is possibly fitting that Matthew was anti-Pauline,⁷⁸¹ but he denies this was the reality of the early church. Willitts has argued that Paul and Matthew were both Law-observant Jews,⁷⁸² and that both agreed on a Law-free Gentile mission.⁷⁸³ As such, Willitts argues that there is no basis for advocating that Matthew was anti-Pauline. Instead, he maintains that Matthew was either un-Pauline or pro-Pauline,⁷⁸⁴ and that Matthew and Paul could have been friends.⁷⁸⁵ Sim's work has also been questioned in a book chapter by K. R. Iverson, who has focused on Sim's claims about

⁷⁷⁶ Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition', 389-90.

⁷⁷⁷ G. Thiessen, 'Kirche Oder Sekt? Über Einheit Und Konflikt Im Frühen Urchristentum,' *ThG* 48 (2005), 162-75; G. Thiessen, 'Kritik an Paul Im Matthäusevangelium? Von Der Kunst Verdeckter Polemik Im Urchristentum', in *Polemik in Der Frühchristlichen Literatur: Texte Und Kontexte*, ed. O. Wischmeyer and L. Scornaienchi (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 465-90; E. K. C. Wong, *Evangelien Im Dialog Mit Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 107-30.

⁷⁷⁸ White, '(Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul', 354.

⁷⁷⁹ D. J. Harrington, 'Matthew and Paul', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. D. C. Sim and B. Repschinski (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 11-26, 25. Others who have written on the Matthew-Paul relationship without reference to Sim's thesis include D. Catchpole, who argued that by taking any position on the mission to the Gentiles, Matthew is necessarily taking a position on Pauline Christianity, though Catchpole does not go as far as to state what that position is. D. Catchpole, *Resurrection People: Studies in the Resurrection Narratives of the Gospels* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000), 43-52. See also T. L. Brodie, who elaborated on how Matthew knew and utilised Romans. T. L. Brodie, *The Birthing of the New Testament: The Intertextual Development of the New Testament Writings* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2004), 219-35.

⁷⁸⁰ J. Zangenberg, 'Matthew and James', in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*, ed. D. C. Sim and B. Repschinski (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 104-22, 120; Foster, 'Paul and Matthew', 114.

⁷⁸¹ Willitts, 'Friendship', 150.

⁷⁸² J. Willitts, 'Paul and Matthew: A Descriptive Approach from a Post-New Perspective Interpretative Framework', in *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts and Convergences*, ed. M. F. Bird and J. Willitts (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 62-85, 67.

⁷⁸³ Willitts, 'Friendship', 151-55.

⁷⁸⁴ Willitts, 'Descriptive Approach', 85.

⁷⁸⁵ Willitts, 'Friendship', 156.

Matt. 16:17-19. Iverson focuses on the intertextuality Sim claims in this pericope, arguing that the case for a direct connection is weak, and that at most the correlation with Pauline language in Galatians demonstrates an intersect between the two texts, but little more.⁷⁸⁶ On the general topic of Matthew's anti-Paulinism, however, he questions how Sim can come to such a strong conclusion that Matthew saw Paul and his followers as eschatologically condemned when Matthew never mentions Paul by name.⁷⁸⁷

5.2.2 Matthew and Paul: foundational matters

To some extent, discussion of Matthew and Paul can be framed in a similar way to the discussion of Mark and Paul, and so be approached by observing similarities and differences. This is an approach that has been undertaken before, whereby scholars have compared Matthew and Paul on various topics and used these as a framework through which to determine whether there was a direct relationship. In 1947 C. H. Dodd detailed some characteristics he said were frequently espoused as a commonality between Matthew and Paul; their shared eschatological framework,⁷⁸⁸ their similarities in dealing with offenders within the community,⁷⁸⁹ and their criticisms of contemporary Judaism.⁷⁹⁰ All of these ideas, Dodd concluded, were not evidence of a dependence of Matthew on Paul, but had roots in contemporary Judaism, and so thus can be explained from Paul's and Matthew's common Jewish origin.⁷⁹¹ Similarly, P. Foster has more recently compared the two on the areas of the use of the Hebrew Scriptures, attitudes towards the Torah, Christology, participation in the Gentile mission, and community structures. Foster concedes from the beginning of his work that it is impossible to know whether Matthew knew Paul, but his conclusions (and title) suggest that he saw it as more likely that Matthew did not know Paul; these shared ideas were too general to establish a case of dependence.⁷⁹² It is thus discernible in scholarship that while Matthew and Paul have been compared in the past, it is not often claimed that similarities indicate that Matthew was influenced by Paul. An exception is M. D. Goulder,⁷⁹³ who, whilst explicitly stating that Matthew was not a Pauline Christian (an 'impossible thesis'),⁷⁹⁴ claimed that Paul was a central influence for Matthew. He looked to the figures' ideas on the topics of ethics, evangelisation, the church, anti-Pharisaic sentiment, eschatology, and citations from the Hebrew

⁷⁸⁶ K. R. Iverson, 'An Enemy of the Gospel: Anti-Paulinisms and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew', in *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honour of Frank J. Matera*, ed. C. W. Skinner and K. R. Iverson (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 7-32, 15-23.

⁷⁸⁷ Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 9.

⁷⁸⁸ Matt. 24-25; 1 Cor. 15.

⁷⁸⁹ Matt. 18:15-17 cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 6:1-8; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 7:10-18; Gal. 6:1

⁷⁹⁰ In Matthew these are expressed in Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees, especially Matt. 23, and in Paul they are confronted in Romans 2. C. H. Dodd, 'Matthew and Paul,' *ExpT* 58 (1947), 293-98, 296.

⁷⁹¹ Dodd, 'Matthew and Paul', 297.

⁷⁹² Foster, 'Paul and Matthew', 114.

⁷⁹³ Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 153-70.

⁷⁹⁴ Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 170.

Scriptures, as well as their mutual ideas over Christology.⁷⁹⁵ Paul, Goulder writes, was a key influence on Matthew, even if they disagreed on matters of the Law. However, Goulder's arguments are problematic. His claim that Paul and Matthew share ideas of Jesus' identity and general Christology (such as Jesus' authority and Jesus' unique relationship with the Father) is not a convincing argument for Matthean knowledge of Paul, as these were very general Christian concepts, and can be found in any two Christian documents in the first century. As such they cannot be attributed to a Pauline influence unless Paul is said to have influenced every single Christian community in the first century. Similarly, the practice of citing proof texts from Scripture is certainly not a Pauline innovation, and so Matthew's heavy use of this device is by no means necessarily a result of knowing Paul. Similar arguments can be made for Goulder's highlighting of the eschatology and ethics of the pair, which he also espouses are evidence of Pauline influence on Matthew, but which had a long history in Jewish thought and so can easily be attributed to a common source rather than influence. Thus the similarities that Goulder highlighted are not particularly Pauline, and so do not demonstrate that Matthew was heavily influenced by Paul.

Overall, the Matthean Gospel contains few unique parallels with Pauline ideas. One is hard pressed to find a similarity that is unique to Matthew and Paul that does not also appear in Mark or was not common in contemporary Judaism or Christianity. For example, while Matthew has an extended passion narrative, and predictions of this event throughout the story, these are all traceable back to the Markan narrative, and so do not demonstrate a Pauline influence. This applies to a number of strong parallels between Matthew and Paul; Jesus as fulfilment of Jewish Scripture,⁷⁹⁶ taking the gospels to the Jews and then Gentiles, and universality of faith,⁷⁹⁷ as well as smaller parallels such as the words used at the Last Supper.⁷⁹⁸ All such similarities can be easily attributed to use of Mark or to common Jewish practice, not Pauline influence on Matthew.

A more useful starting point on this question then, is whether Matthew and Paul could be considered as theologically aligned, and thus whether Matthew even had cause to be critical of Paul. As might be expected, there are varying opinions on whether Matthew and Paul were theologically close or more distant. As was seen above, Davies was influential in promoting the closeness between Matthew and Paul, and his conclusion is echoed by many other scholars who

⁷⁹⁵ More specifically, Jesus' dual sonship to David and God (Matt. 1:1, 6; 4:3, 6; Rom. 1:3-4); Jesus' authority (Matt. 11:27; 28:18 cf. Phil. 2:10; Eph. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:27); Jesus' unique relationship with the Father (Matt. 11:27 cf. Col. 1:12, 19; 1 Cor. 15:28; Eph. 2:18); Jesus' glory (Matt. 17:2; 2 Cor. 3:7-18); the relation of Christ to the church (Matt. 1:21; 28:20, and in Paul's 'doctrine of the Body'), and in the idea of Jesus' function as a saviour from sin (Matt. 1:21; Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7). Goulder, *Midrash and Lektion*, 156.

⁷⁹⁶ This also was common in contemporary Judaism. Foster, 'Paul and Matthew', 92.

⁷⁹⁷ Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, 152-53.

⁷⁹⁸ Matt. 26:28 cf. 1 Cor. 11:25.

claim a close theological alignment between the two.⁷⁹⁹ Even those who acknowledge the differences Matthew and Paul had in ideas about the Law and the Gentile mission often still conclude that the two were basically complementary.⁸⁰⁰ Some opt for Matthew as a ‘middle of the road’ Petrine figure between Paul and James,⁸⁰¹ while others see Matthew and Paul as standing in tension with each other.⁸⁰²

This study has shown that on the topic of Gentiles and the Law, Matthew and Paul stood at opposite sides of the early church debate. While Paul advocated that Gentiles need not, indeed should not, follow the ritualistic laws of the Torah (Gal. 3:23-29), Matthew was insistent that the Law should always remain in place (5:17-19), and that the universalisation of the gospel required Gentiles to adhere to it (28:16-20). While the pair undoubtedly agreed on other key Christian ideas, especially the importance of Jesus, the disagreement on the topic of the Law for Gentiles was immensely consequential for the unity of the early church; it was the cause of the Council, the Incident at Antioch, the departure of Paul, and many other clashes between Law-abiding and Law-free groups in the first century. Even scholars who claim that Matthew and Paul were close admit that this was an issue of contention, they just do not put as much weight and value in this difference as is deserved.⁸⁰³ Matthew and Paul, then, were on opposite sides of the significant and long-running debate in the early church. As such, it is entirely likely that, as Sim and others have contested, that Matthew *had cause to criticise Paul*. The remaining question then, is whether his Gospel was indeed critical of Paul.

Having established that Matthew and Paul would have been at odds with each other, it next needs to be established whether Matthew even knew of the Pauline tradition. There are some who claim that Matthew could not have been consciously anti-Pauline because Paul was not even known to Matthew, and as such an anti-Pauline polemic cannot be present in the Gospel.⁸⁰⁴ Therefore, it needs to be established whether Matthew could have even known about Paul. The first (and simplest) option is to determine whether Paul’s letters were circulating individually or as

⁷⁹⁹ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 316-66; As well as those listed above see D. A. Hagner, ‘Balancing the Old and the New: The Law of Moses in Matthew and Paul,’ *Int* 51 (1997), 20-30, 28-29; Willitts, ‘Descriptive Approach’, 62.

⁸⁰⁰ Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 42-47, 131-32; Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, 146-53; I. C. Shin and A. van Aarde, ‘Matthew’s and Paul’s Inclusive Tendencies: A Comparison,’ *HTS* 61 (2005), 1353-72, 1354, 1357-68.

⁸⁰¹ Meier, ‘Antioch’, 57; Segal, ‘Matthew’s Jewish Voice’ 21-22.

⁸⁰² Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 232-36; Sim, ‘Matthew’s Anti-Paulinism’, 776-81; White, ‘(Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul’, 354.

⁸⁰³ J. Willitts admits that if a Tübingen-like division is seen between Law-free and Law-abiding gospels, then Sim’s thesis is possible. Willitts, ‘Friendship’, 150.

⁸⁰⁴ Luz, *Theology of Matthew*, 146-47; Zangenberg, ‘Matthew and James’, 120; Foster, ‘Paul and Matthew’, 114.

a group at the time of Matthew. While theories range substantially,⁸⁰⁵ there are clear references to Paul's collected or circulating letters in several texts written by the turn of the first century and into the second century (*1 Clement* 47:1-3; *Ignatius Eph.* 12:2; cf. *2 Pet.* 3:15). As such, it is perfectly possible that Matthew had access to any number of Paul's letters. However, it is difficult to be sure that Matthew had access to and cited Paul's letters.

While some have previously argued that verbal parallels alone demonstrate that Matthew was influenced by Paul, arguments for this line of reasoning are weak, and rely on very small verbal parallels. This was the case put forward by M. D. Goulder. He highlights some verbal parallels that he says demonstrate that Paul was a key influence for Matthew; the Lord coming like a thief in the night (Matt. 24:23; 1 Thess. 5:2), the presence of the Lord when a few are assembled (Matt. 18:17, 20; 1 Cor. 5:3-4), and disciples getting their living by the gospel (Matt. 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:14). These parallels, however, are weak, and alone do not demonstrate any kind of Matthean knowledge of the Pauline epistles. These sayings are not thematically significant for Paul, nor are they for Matthew, and they could easily have been common sayings in the early church. D. C. Sim has also suggested that there are verbal parallels between Matt. 16:17-19 and Gal. 1:12, 16-17. This passage will be discussed in more detail below, but Sim's parallels of the phrase 'flesh and blood' (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα; Matt. 16:17; Gal. 1:16), as well as the terms for rock (πέτρα; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 10:4) and reveal (ἀποκαλύπτω; Matt. 16:17; Gal. 1:12, 16), again, are not strong enough to indicate that Matthew received these terms from Paul.⁸⁰⁶

Matthew's Gospel thus contains no significant allusions or echoes to Paul's epistles. However, Matthew may have been exposed to Pauline teaching in a different form. If Paul's teaching was not primarily circulated by his letters at Matthew's time, there are other options for how Matthew may have come across Pauline teaching. Oral communication was the principal medium in the first century, and Matthew could have learned about Pauline theology in this way. Matthew could have received this oral tradition from Paul's followers or even from Law-abiding groups in his community who were speaking out against it. A good example of knowing Pauline theology by other means is the third evangelist. Luke, Matthew's rough contemporary, appears to have been completely unaware of any Pauline letters, even though Paul featured as a key character in Acts. Luke would not have had any reason to leave out this fact about Paul, and so it might give

⁸⁰⁵ For a summary of current theories about the formation of the Pauline canon see Porter, 'Pauline Canon', 95-127.

⁸⁰⁶ Sim himself changes on whether Matt. 16:17-19 indicates that Matthew knew Paul's letter to the Galatians, or whether Paul would have used this defence regularly. Compare Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 203; Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 402-11.

further credibility to the idea that Paul's letters were only compiled and circulated after this time,⁸⁰⁷ or that they were not the primary means through which Paul's teaching was circulated.

As such, it can be confirmed that while it is entirely possible that Pauline letters were circulating beyond their original audience by the time Matthew penned his Gospel and that Matthew had access to them, Matthew's Gospel shows no influence from them. Instead Paul's teaching could have been known to Matthew in any number of alternative ways, and so a lack of citation or strong allusion in Matthew does not discount that Matthew knew of Pauline teaching in some form.

Due to the weaker intertextual evidence, it is helpful to instead ask whether Matthew *would have* had access to Pauline letters. Following R. B. Hays' criteria for intertextuality,⁸⁰⁸ Sim writes about the 'criterion of availability' in order to argue that Matthew would definitely have known about Paul.⁸⁰⁹ His arguments, seen in various publications, can be summarised as follows. Firstly, that Matthew was written at least three to four decades after Paul's ministry and so it follows that Matthew could have known Paul.⁸¹⁰ Secondly, that Paul's letters were widely read and widely available, as evident by their citation in 1 Peter 3:15-16, and they are explicitly referred to in the letters of Ignatius and 1 Clement.⁸¹¹ Thirdly, Ignatius of Antioch's familiarity with Paul is telling if Matthew was also written in that city.⁸¹² Fourthly, Paul's fame would have been considerable and particularly widespread, especially given his extended periods spent in major cities such as Damascus and Antioch, as well as his involvement in the Jerusalem Council, and his communication with churches throughout Asia Minor.⁸¹³ On this point, Sim also points out that Paul's fame and authority were so widespread throughout Asia Minor, even in his own lifetime, that he could write to the church in Rome with considerable authority even though he had not founded the church or visited there before. Fifthly, the deuterio-Pauline letters, as well as Paul's primary role in Acts, and his influence on Ignatius, testifies to Paul's continuing influence that was flourishing by Matthew's time.⁸¹⁴ And sixthly, that Matthew's access to documents such as Mark and Q demonstrate that he was not writing from an isolated area that would have prevented him

⁸⁰⁷ Porter, 'Pauline Canon', 126.

⁸⁰⁸ Hays, *Echoes in Paul*, 34-45.

⁸⁰⁹ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 405.

⁸¹⁰ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 405-08.

⁸¹¹ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 405-08. Goulder makes a similar point; that if the Pauline letters were Scripture to Basilides in the early second century, then they were clearly influential for a considerable period beforehand. See Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 170.

⁸¹² Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 405-08. Another point made in Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 154-55.

⁸¹³ Sim, 'Reception', 598-99.

⁸¹⁴ Sim, 'Reception', 600.

from hearing about Paul.⁸¹⁵ Sim thus concludes from all these factors that it is implausible that Matthew was ignorant of Paul.⁸¹⁶ Sim's case is convincing, and from the available evidence and knowledge of first century realities, it can thus only be safely concluded that while it is not certain that Matthew knew Paul, it is most likely that the evangelist would have known Pauline theology in some form, and we shall travel forth on this assumption.

There are some who claim that rather than being pro-Pauline or anti-Pauline, that Matthew was *un*-Pauline; that he may have known Pauline writings, but did not respond to them in his Gospel and was wholly uninfluenced by them. This position was most prominently articulated by G. N. Stanton, who made a passing comment that, 'Matthew's Gospel as a whole is neither anti-Pauline, nor has it been strongly influenced by Paul's writings; it is simply un-Pauline'.⁸¹⁷ That Matthew was un-Pauline is a position still held today.⁸¹⁸ Sim disagrees with this position. He holds that it is implausible that Matthew would not respond to Paul.⁸¹⁹ For Sim, the issue of the Law was too significant for Matthew to have not reacted in some way.⁸²⁰ But this option is not implausible, as Sim claims. It is entirely possible that Matthew knew Paul but did not want to respond to him – the complete lack of Pauline allusion in Matthew despite the fame of Paul completely supports this line of argument. It is also possible that Matthew did not think a critique of Paul was useful to his audience, or perhaps Pauline followers were not a significant issue for Matthew. Nothing discounts such scenarios, and so the idea of an un-Pauline Matthew still holds merit.

Given that Matthew very likely knew Pauline theology, but possibly not his letters, there is still a possible argument that Matthew was responding to Paul's general position, even in the absence of clear allusion to Paul or Pauline epistles. This is Sim's argument. He acknowledges that Matthew does not ever mention Paul explicitly, nor does the evangelist cite Pauline letters (Sim says that for Matthew to have explicitly acknowledged Paul in the narrative would have been too anachronistic),⁸²¹ But despite a lack of direct acknowledgement, Sim claims that some Matthean passages have anti-Pauline allusions that he argues are intended as direct criticisms of Pauline Christianity. Sim outlines five Matthean passages that he claims particularly reflect this anti-

⁸¹⁵ Sim, 'Reception', 598. Bauckham's thesis about the heavy communication between Christian communities is possibly also relevant here; Bauckham, 'For Whom Were the Gospels Written?', 9-48. Likewise, Goulder has written that Paul's letters were so consistently used and circulated in Matthew's time, that it would only be feasible for Matthew's ignorance of them if he was based on the Sea of Azov or in Portugal, heavily isolated from the rest of Christianity. See Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, 170.

⁸¹⁶ Sim even goes so far as to claim that Matthew was in direct contact with contemporary followers of Paul; 7:15-53; 24:11-12. See Sim, 'Reception', 601, 603.

⁸¹⁷ Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 314.

⁸¹⁸ Zangenberg, 'Matthew and James', 120; Foster, 'Paul and Matthew', 114.

⁸¹⁹ Sim, 'Conflict in the Canon', 84-85.

⁸²⁰ Sim, 'Conflict in the Canon', 76-77.

⁸²¹ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 402-13.

Pauline sentiment; Matt. 5:17-19; 7:21-23; 13:24-43; 16:17-19; 28:16-20. These shall be looked at in turn to determine whether they actually do reflect an anti-Pauline polemic.

It will be seen in the course of the following discussion that none of these five passages makes a specifically Pauline target clear. Even Sim only argues that Paulinists are the ‘most obvious’ target for Matthew’s Law-free polemic,⁸²² but there are other targets who Matthew could have been meaning to critique. He could have been targeting a Law-free gospel that was not Pauline. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the Law-free movement was indeed bigger than Paul, and so an attack on a general Law-free gospel does not automatically mean that Matthew was critiquing a specifically Pauline Gospel. This is a position advocated most notably by G. Barth, who argued that Matthew was indeed attacking a group who claimed that Christ had abolished the law and who relied on their spiritual gifts, but Barth argues that Matthew cannot be said to refer here to Paulinism because he lacks reference to the characteristically Pauline theology of faith (πίστις).⁸²³ J. Zangenberg has also questioned Sim on his stance; he questions how *specifically* anti-Pauline these passages in Matthew are.⁸²⁴ The evidence available in the Matthean text then does not strongly indicate an anti-Pauline intention on the part of the evangelist. As with Mark and Paul, while Matthew’s ideas can be seen to be oppositional to some of Paul’s, this is more likely an anachronistic interpretation of the evangelist; it is a judgement that is fair to apply to the evangelist’s theology, but it is unfair to assign it to the evangelist’s conscious intentions.

5.2.3 Anti-Pauline texts in Matthew

The earliest, and more noticeable, example of a possible anti-Pauline sentiment in Matthew that Sim points to is the trio of sayings on the enduring importance of the Law in 5:17-19. Sim focuses on the anti-Law-free sentiment in 5:17 (‘do not think that I have come to abolish the Law’),⁸²⁵ but others before him have used 5:19 (‘whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven’) to emphasise the anti-Pauline nature of this text.⁸²⁶ As was earlier discussed, this passage makes it clear that Matthew was promoting a Law-abiding gospel, but there is disagreement about the intention of these statements. While some see an attack on a Law-free gospel,⁸²⁷ others suggest that Matthew was

⁸²² Sim, ‘Matthew’s Anti-Paulinism’, 778.

⁸²³ As such, he concluded that Matthew was opposing Hellenistic Christians, not Pauline followers. Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 159-64.

⁸²⁴ Zangenberg, ‘Matthew and James’, 120.

⁸²⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 207-09.

⁸²⁶ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 233-34.

⁸²⁷ Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 256; Barth, ‘Matthew’s Understanding of the Law’, 64-65, 159; Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 138, 163; Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung Zwischen Kirche Und Judentum Im Matthäusevangelium*, 64; Beare, *Matthew*, 141; Sim, ‘Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition’; Wenham, ‘The Rock on Which to Build’, 200.

here defending his community from accusations that *they* were breaking the Torah,⁸²⁸ possibly from the Pharisees.⁸²⁹ Some see it as a caution against possible interpretations of the upcoming antitheses,⁸³⁰ or even the preceding beatitudes, which do not mention the Law or prophets.⁸³¹ It has even been suggested that the negative language in 5:17 (Μὴ νομίσητε) does not suggest a criticism or a defence.⁸³² While the intent of the passage did not matter in arguing that Matthew was promoting a Law-abiding gospel (the statement itself is explicit on this point), the intent of the statement is of prime importance for assessing an explicitly critical attitude to Pauline theology.

It is clear from this passage that Matthew was at odds with a Law-free position. But, as the disagreement over the purpose of 5:17-19 demonstrates, it is by no means certain that the passage was meant as a *criticism* of a Law-free gospel. However, even if Matt. 5:17-19 *was* certain to be a polemic against a Law-free gospel, there is no strong indication that Matthew had a specifically *Pauline* Law-free gospel in mind with this critique. The only described feature of this Matthean target is that they claimed that Jesus was the end of the Torah. This does completely fit in with what can be seen in the Pauline letters (Rom. 10:4), but Paul would not have been the only Law-free Christian to have claimed that Christ signalled the end of the Law. The reference to the ‘least’ (ἐλάχιστος) in 5:19 has also been linked to Paul’s description of himself in 1 Cor. 15:9,⁸³³ but this is only one parallel word that was not uncommon even in Matthew,⁸³⁴ and so it is not clear that Matthew was here meaning to imply Paul.

Sim does not claim that 5:17-19 contains a uniquely Pauline theology, but he argues that Paul and his followers are ‘the most obvious candidates’ for the description here.⁸³⁵ But such a conclusion is not warranted by the text. While Paul is the most prominent Law-free figure in the canon and in the world of modern biblical scholarship, this was not necessarily the case in Matthew’s environment. The New Testament canon testifies to various other Law-free communities (the Roman and Johannine communities), as well as others that may have launched from Antioch as Paul did. There is no strong reason that the only Law-free community Matthew knew was Paul’s. To claim, then, that Matt. 5:17-19 was an attack on a Pauline gospel is to make two assumptions that do not have solid foundations; firstly, that the text was intended as an attack,

⁸²⁸ Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 49; Hagner, *Matthew*, 104; Foster, *Community, Law and Mission*, 164; Thiessen, ‘Abolishers’.

⁸²⁹ So explaining the sudden reference to the Pharisees in 5:20. Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 86.

⁸³⁰ Meier, *Matthew*, 46; Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 481-82; Snodgrass, ‘Matthew’s Understanding’, 372.

⁸³¹ Deines, ‘Not the Law’, 73-74.

⁸³² Note the similar negative language in Matt. 10:34. Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 2013, n.28.

⁸³³ Davies, *Sermon on the Mount*, 334-36.

⁸³⁴ Matt. 2:6; 25:40, 45. The use of the word later in 5:19 (‘least in the Kingdom of Heaven’) could also be an echo of the term used earlier in the same verse (‘the least of these commandments’).

⁸³⁵ Sim, ‘Matthew’s Anti-Paulinism’, 778.

and secondly that Matthew had Pauline Law-free Christians in mind. It is, of course, possible that Matt. 5:17-19 was intended as an anti-Pauline text. As this study has described, one of Paul's key theological ideas was that the Gentiles should not have to follow the ritualistic aspects of the Law, and as such, he would certainly fall under the criterion which Matthew here has provided. But this does not automatically make this passage a deliberately anti-Pauline passage.

Despite its numerous drawbacks, Matt. 5:17-19 is one of the stronger arguments for the presence of an anti-Pauline attitude in Matthew. It is a directive in the words of Christ, spoken during his primary teaching block, and it directly condemns and denies a Law-free gospel. But while there are possibly faint Pauline echoes (5:19), these are not strong. The statement lacks anything that can be directly and definitely attributed to a Pauline Law-free theology, as opposed to a general Law-free theology. G. N. Stanton has commented that this passage can only be seen as anti-Pauline if anti-Paulinism was a prevalent attitude throughout Matthew.⁸³⁶ Stanton's standard of proof is fair, and this brief discussion has shown that 5:17-19 does not hold up as an explicitly anti-Pauline critique on its own. Thus, while Matt. 5:17-19 does not discount the *possibility* that Matthew was criticising a Pauline theology, it does not establish the case on its own.

Also featuring in the Sermon on the Mount is a collection of sayings about false prophets, among which is a short pericope about the fate of some at the future judgement;

Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers (ἀνομία)".

Sim argues that this passage was specifically designed by Matthew to be another attack on Pauline Christians.⁸³⁷ Once again, the scene has eschatological overtones as the passage takes place in a scene of the divine judgement and so the condemnation is a significant one.⁸³⁸ Sim breaks down the criteria outlined in this passage to argue that those referenced in these verses are most likely Pauline followers. On 7:21, he argues that Matthew is condemning a Pauline claim that calling Jesus Lord is enough for salvation, and so Matthew adds the additional criterion of doing the will of the Father.⁸³⁹ On 7:22, Sim argues that the three listed activities – prophesying, exorcising demons, and performing deeds of power – were characteristically Pauline activities. He has amended the Q text, which had mentioned eating, drinking and teaching (Luke 13:26) in order to amend this passage into a condemnation of Pauline theology. In order to demonstrate that these

⁸³⁶ An attitude he claims is not there. Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 312-13.

⁸³⁷ See especially Sim, 'Matthew 7.21-23', 327.

⁸³⁸ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 779.

⁸³⁹ E.g. Rom. 10:9-13.

activities were particularly Pauline, Sim points to Paul's own claims that, amongst other things, working miracles and prophesying were gifts of the Holy Spirit, and so are in accord with calling Jesus Lord.⁸⁴⁰ Prophecy was also seen as a feature of Pauline churches,⁸⁴¹ and while casting out demons is not an activity outlined in Paul's letters, it was later attributed to him in Acts.⁸⁴² Sim argues that Matthew thus chose these activities because they were important for the Pauline community and so representative of them.⁸⁴³ So Matthew is here, once again, condemning a Pauline gospel. Finally, in 7:23, the Matthean Jesus concludes that these people will be rejected at the judgement, where Jesus will deny that he knows them, calling them ἀνομία. In this passage, Sim highlights Matthew's use of the word ἀνομία, which he says, in a Matthean context, means those who do not follow the Torah. Taking all this into account, Sim argues that Matthew has redacted a story about the judgement, and turned it into a story that condemned Pauline theology. He highlights the eschatological consequences for the Law-free gospel, that once again, Matthew was condemning Paul and his followers to eschatological punishment.⁸⁴⁴

Sim further claims that the identity of those intended in 7:21-23 has implications for the surrounding passages (7:14-27), where the Matthean Jesus also refers to the same group, but only as 'false prophets' (7:15), condemning them as ravenous wolves who will be known by their fruits (7:20).⁸⁴⁵ Sim also argues that 7:24-27 continues this critique, condemning those who build their house on sand, and commending those who build their house on rock (πέτρα). He argues that this is meant to be a reference to Peter in Matt. 16:17-19 (σὺ εἶ Πέτρος), thus not only condemning Paul as the alternative house built on sand, but promoting the Petrine Law-abiding tradition over the Pauline Law-free gospel.⁸⁴⁶ Sim thus sees the entire series of sayings and stories in Matt. 7:14-27 as anti-Pauline polemics.

There are some uncertainties about Sim's argument. On 7:22 for starters, Pauline Christians were by no means the only Christians to call Jesus Lord.⁸⁴⁷ Even though, as Sim points out, Paul made a particular point of it, this does not mean that the act of calling Jesus 'Lord' should indicate a Pauline theology. Further, the activities that the Matthean Jesus describes are not unique to Pauline Christianity either;⁸⁴⁸ prophecy, exorcism, and performing miracles all had a long history in the Jewish tradition (and others), and this continued into the first century, and easily fed

⁸⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 4-11.

⁸⁴¹ 1 Cor. 14:29-32, 37; 1 Thess. 5:20; Eph. 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14; cf. Rom. 12:6.

⁸⁴² Acts 16:16-18; 19:13-20

⁸⁴³ Sim, 'Matthew 7.21-23', 328.

⁸⁴⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 211.

⁸⁴⁵ Sim, 'Matthew 7.21-23', 325-27. Barth also makes this point about the implication the interpretation of this passage has for the surrounding stories; Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 162-63.

⁸⁴⁶ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 779.

⁸⁴⁷ Matthew himself makes a point of it; 10:24-25; 12:8; 24:42.

⁸⁴⁸ Zangenberg, 'Matthew and James', 120.

into various strains of the Christian movement. Many of the Gospels, including Matthew's, attest to these activities performed by Jesus himself (e.g. 14:25; 17:18; 24:2). On prophecy, particularly, Josephus' writings indicate that the act of prophesying was still active up to his day, and there is some evidence that this was a common idea in the first century.⁸⁴⁹ Mark 6:14-15 and 8:27-28 also possibly testify to the existence of prophecy in the first century.⁸⁵⁰ To thus say that these deeds were only representative of the Pauline community is to cast aside the long and widespread history they have in the Judeo-Christian narrative up to this point. Sim's claims, therefore, take the available evidence too far; just referring to calling Jesus 'Lord', prophesying, casting out demons, and performing miracles does not automatically indicate a Pauline target in the evangelist's mind.

Matthean use of the word ἀνομία needs to be revisited. It was seen in an earlier chapter that Matthew's four uses of the word were unique to the evangelist,⁸⁵¹ and so the word is particularly Matthean amongst the Gospels. However, the meaning of the word in a Matthean context is particularly debated. In all uses outside of Matthew the word is taken to mean general wickedness or sinfulness, without reference to the Torah.⁸⁵² This is even the case for pre-Christian use of the word.⁸⁵³ However, given the prominent role that the Torah (νόμος) plays in the Gospel, it has been suggested that ἀνομία might take on a different meaning in Matthew, to instead refer to those who do not follow the Torah.⁸⁵⁴ Sim relies on this alternative interpretation to further argue that 7:21-23 references Pauline Christians.⁸⁵⁵ On this point, J. Zangenber raises a crucial point: how exclusively Pauline was the title of 'lawless'? Even if it did refer to those who did not follow Torah, there is nothing specifically Pauline about the term.⁸⁵⁶ As such, there is by no means certainty that the term referred to Torah-free practices in the first place, much less implicated Paul.

So once again, there is not an explicit or defining reference to Paul in 7:21-23. Paul was not the only one to call Jesus Lord, the deeds listed by the Matthean Jesus in 7:22 do not refer to

⁸⁴⁹ See R. Gray, *Prophetic Figures in Late Second Temple Jewish Palestine: The Evidence from Josephus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 7-34.

⁸⁵⁰ L. H. Feldman, 'Prophets and Prophecy in Josephus,' *JTS* 41 (1990), 386-422, 404-05.

⁸⁵¹ Matt. 7:23; 13:41; 23:28; 24:12.

⁸⁵² Rom. 4:7; 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 John 3:4.

⁸⁵³ Ps. 6:8; 119:115; 139:19. See Keener, *Matthew*, 254.

⁸⁵⁴ Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law', 162-63; Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung Zwischen Kirche Und Judentum Im Matthäusevangelium*, 64-68; Harrington, *Matthew*, 108. Many disagree, and argue that the term is not about the Law at all; Meier, *Matthew*, 74; Hagner, *Matthew*, 188; Hare, *Matthew*, 85; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 295. Davies and Allison conclude that these false prophets cannot be identified. Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, 714.

⁸⁵⁵ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 205. It is also notable that later in the Gospel Matthew condemns the Pharisees for being ἀνομία (23:28), thus calling into doubt whether the term was used exclusively to mean those who did not follow the Torah. Sim addresses this point by saying that the term for Matthew was meant as a general criticism, and so was intended to encompass anyone who was not following the Law properly. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 205.

⁸⁵⁶ J. Zangenber also interestingly notes that even James, brother of Jesus, was executed for lawlessness (Josephus, *Ant.* 20:200). Zangenber, 'Matthew and James', 120.

exclusively Pauline characteristics, and even if ἀνομία did mean lawless, this was not an exclusively Pauline theology. As such, Sim's case takes the meaning of 7:21-23 further than the evidence can allow. The only responsible conclusion is that Matt. 7:21-23 *possibly* was written with Pauline Christians in mind. Anything more definite than that goes beyond the evidence.

The parable of the tares in Matthew (13:24-43) involves the mixing of wheat and tares until the day of judgement, when the righteous will finally be separated from the unrighteous, and each will finally get what they deserve; righteousness in the Kingdom of Heaven, or condemnation to fire. Sim insists that this parable, described as being about the Kingdom of the Son of Man (13:37-38) is about the Christian movement – not the Matthean community, or the wider universal community – and so is about the good and evil within that movement.⁸⁵⁷ Sim again draws on the evangelist's use of ἀνομία (13:41) to conclude that this parable is about the condemnation of the Law-free Christians into the furnace of fire and so is another instance of Matthew condemning Pauline Christians. Further, the early passing reference to everybody sleeping (13:25) Sim says refers to the disciples, who let Paul and his fellow Law-free Christians take over.⁸⁵⁸ Brandon also wrote about this parable, and argued that the enemy who planted the weeds amongst the wheat was Paul, even suggesting that the original text read Paul's name, but was changed to Satan as an 'early official interpolation'.⁸⁵⁹ Sim does not go this far, instead arguing that Matthew is implying that Satan was responsible for such tares in the wheat field of the Christian movement, and that Paul and his followers were in the service of the devil.⁸⁶⁰

But again, this example that Sim cites as an anti-Pauline text contains no indication that Matthew was referring to Paul specifically. Aside from the contested meaning of the word ἀνομία, there is no reference to the activities or characteristics of those who are condemned at all. They are only described as being in the Kingdom of the Son of Man. While Sim denies that this could be referring to Matthew's own community, or to the wider Jewish or even universal communities, there is no strong evidence that precludes these scenarios. If Matthew's use of ἀνομία is consistent with his description of the Pharisees in this way, then there is nothing that discounts that Matthew was here talking about the Pharisees, whom he elsewhere condemns to eschatological doom on numerous occasions and whom he also refers to as ἀνομία (23:28).⁸⁶¹ There is thus no certainty that Matthew was referring to Law-free Christians in this parable, and there is no indication at all that Matthew was talking about Paul specifically. The parable of the tares on its own, then, cannot reasonably be attributed to a criticism of Paul.

⁸⁵⁷ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 203-04.

⁸⁵⁸ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 206.

⁸⁵⁹ Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 235.

⁸⁶⁰ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 206, n. 100.

⁸⁶¹ E.g. Matt. 3:7-8; 23:33.

Following Brandon, Sim argues that Matthew's exaltation of Peter in 16:17-19 is partly the result of trying to demote Paul.⁸⁶² Sim claims that this declaration from Jesus was intended as a correction of Paul's claims in Gal. 1:12, 16-17, that he had received the gospel not through human beings but from Christ himself.⁸⁶³ Sim says that here, Matthew is affirming that *Peter* is receiving his gospel not from flesh and blood, but from God (16:17). Sim points out that most scholars see 16:18-19 as a 'polemical refutation of the claims of someone else', and Sim claims it is more likely this is directed against Paul.⁸⁶⁴ Here, Sim argues, Matthew is rewriting the Pauline tradition.⁸⁶⁵

Sim also claims that there are distinct verbal parallels between Matthew's language in 16:17, and Paul's claims on his own authority for receiving the gospel in Gal. 1:12. Both passages have God as the divine origin of the gospel, and both deny a human origin, but both also deny the human origin using the same terms; 'flesh and blood' (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα; Matt. 16:17; Gal. 1:16).⁸⁶⁶ Sim argues that while there are other instances in the New Testament of referring to flesh and blood together,⁸⁶⁷ these are incomparable cases because they do not occur in the context of revelation or divine commission. Thus, Sim concludes that a direct link between Matthew and Paul in this instance is the only viable option.⁸⁶⁸ Sim draws another two verbal parallels; one between the authors' mutual use of the word for reveal (ἀποκαλύπτω; Matt. 16:17; Gal. 1:12, 16), and the second in Matthew's claims of Peter as the rock upon which the church will be built, and Paul's claim in 1 Cor. 10:4 that the rock is Christ (πέτρα; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 10:4).⁸⁶⁹ In light of Matthew's reaction to a claim expressed in Galatians, Sim argues that it is likely that Matthew knew Paul's letters.⁸⁷⁰

K. R. Iverson has critiqued Sim's claims of an anti-Pauline intent in this passage in two aspects. Firstly in reference to the subtlety of the Pauline echo in this passage, Iverson writes that this Matthean passage would be an exceptionally subtle reference to Pauline theology and it does not demonstrate a conscious engagement with the Pauline text. It does not reflect the structure of the original text, and only weakly refers to a specific Pauline text as opposed to a general Pauline

⁸⁶² Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 200-03; cf. Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, 232.

⁸⁶³ See Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 411-17. K. R. Iverson specifically took on this claim, and disagrees with Sim, claiming that 16:17-19 is not evidence of Matthean anti-Paulinism. See Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel'.

⁸⁶⁴ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 200-01.

⁸⁶⁵ Sim draws the parallel with *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 18:13-19, a dispute between Peter and Paul, where Paul can only base his authority on visions, while Peter knew the historical Jesus. He says Matt. 16:17-19 is an early version of this argument. Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 202-03.

⁸⁶⁶ Sim, *Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 201-02.

⁸⁶⁷ John 1:13; 8:53-56; 1 Cor. 15:50; Eph. 6:12; Heb. 2:14.

⁸⁶⁸ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 412.

⁸⁶⁹ Sim, 'Matthew's Anti-Paulinism', 778.

⁸⁷⁰ Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 411-17.

idea. At best, Iverson claims, Matthew contains some concepts that potentially intersect with Pauline writings. The lack of distinctive Pauline features thus significantly weakens Sim's claim.⁸⁷¹ Secondly, Iverson critiques the verbal correlations Sim bases his argument on; the parallels come down to one phrase (σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα) and two words (ἀποκαλύπτω and πέτρα). The term flesh (σὰρξ) is not unique to Matthew in this context,⁸⁷² nor is the word blood (αἷμα).⁸⁷³ Iverson points out that 'flesh and blood' is used elsewhere in the New Testament,⁸⁷⁴ even pre-dating the Christian movement.⁸⁷⁵ Further, there is a very weak connection with 1 Cor. 10:4 – only the use of πέτρα, which in itself is not unique for Matthew.⁸⁷⁶ Iverson criticises Sim's conclusion that because this wording in this context is not used elsewhere in the New Testament, then it must mean that Matthew is here echoing Paul.⁸⁷⁷

Iverson also argues that had Matthew wanted to invoke Paul, he could have done so much more clearly, with much clearer and explicit references to the apostle, without falling to anachronism, as Sim claims Matthew would have been trying to avoid.⁸⁷⁸ Had Matthew used a more uniquely Pauline phrase, a conscious connection would have been more obvious. Iverson also makes a point that Matthew's reference in this case is so exceptionally subtle that his audience would be very unlikely to have picked it up and understand the implication that this was meant to undermine Paul's authority and strengthen Peter's. Iverson argues that essentially Matt. 16:17-19 lacks the 'foreignness' that would indicate an intentional Pauline reference.⁸⁷⁹ Iverson thus disagrees that Matt. 16:17-19 was a consciously anti-Pauline text. All the while, however, he does not make an argument as to whether Matthew shows an awareness of Paul in other aspects of his Gospel.

In addition to Iverson's thorough criticism of Sim, it should also be noted that this passage is one of the weaker suggestions of anti-Pauline polemic in Matthew not only because of the fragile verbal parallels, and extremely subtle echoes, but because Matt. 16:17-19 does not actively criticise anyone, Pauline or otherwise. Unlike the previous examples of 7:21-23 and 13:24-43, there is no person or party that Matthew claims to be criticising. It thus goes beyond the text itself to claim the Matthean Jesus' proclamation about Peter for an anti-Pauline motive. The rise of Peter in Matthew's Gospel is much more likely a result of reverence for the apostle,⁸⁸⁰ not just a result of

⁸⁷¹ Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 18-19.

⁸⁷² Matt. 23:30, 35; 26:28; 27:4, 6, 8, 24, 25.

⁸⁷³ Matt. 19:5, 6; 24:22; 26:41.

⁸⁷⁴ 1 Cor. 15:50; Eph. 6:12; Heb. 2:14.

⁸⁷⁵ Sir. 14:18; 17:31. Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 21.

⁸⁷⁶ Matt. 7:24, 25; 16:18; 27:51, 60.

⁸⁷⁷ Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 20; cf. Sim, 'Matthew and the Pauline Corpus', 412.

⁸⁷⁸ Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 23.

⁸⁷⁹ Iverson, 'Enemy of the Gospel', 29.

⁸⁸⁰ Which could have arisen out of Peter's prominence in Antioch, if Matthew was written there,

replacing a Pauline influence; this is seen in Matthew's general promotion of the authority and importance of Peter throughout the Gospel. The claim that Peter's reception of authority from Christ himself as an anti-Pauline feature is thus not evident in the text itself.

Finally, Sim writes that the great commission of 28:16-20 deliberately undermines Pauline ideas in several ways.⁸⁸¹ He argues that here Matthew is fundamentally disputing that there were two legitimate missions, instead claiming that there was only one, which was led by the disciples. This corrective on Matthew's part has several ramifications, which Sim lists as Matthean refutation of Paul on numerous points; Matthew denies not only that there were two missions, but that there were two different gospels, that there were different leaders for each mission, that Paul had authority for a Gentile mission, that the apostles acknowledged two missions, and that Jesus authorised the Gentile mission to any one after the events of 28:16-20.⁸⁸² Sim writes that 28:16-20 was thus 'specifically designed by the evangelist to counter the person, the theology, and the mission of Paul'.⁸⁸³

As with Sim's other examples, the great commission does not hold up as an anti-Pauline text. Like Matt. 16:17-19, the final commission does not function as a critical text. The Matthean Jesus does not highlight a target for criticism as he did in 7:21-23 and 13:24-43; the text then does not appear to be drawing attention to an alternative view at all. Further, the text itself does not even faintly allude to particularly Pauline ideas. The Matthean Jesus' orders to make disciples of all nations are not particularly Pauline at all, and it does not echo Pauline terminology on his Gentile mission. The text does not refer to the Law explicitly at all. While the implication of continuing the Law-abiding gospel that Matthew had promoted is there in his command to teach all that Jesus had taught them, this cannot be said to be a statement on the Law-abiding gospel on its own. It is only in the context of the wider gospel that this passage can be seen to continuing the teaching of the Gospel. In this way, the passage cannot even be said to be a critique of a general Law-free gospel. If Matthew did intend to this passage to be critical of Paul or even of a general Law-free gospel, it is likely that he would have been more explicit about the importance of the Law in the mission to the nations, rather than leaving it as an assumption as he has done.⁸⁸⁴

Given the lack of target and the lack of explicit or even allusion to the Law in the mission to the Gentiles, it is very unlikely that the great commission was intended as an anti-Pauline text,

⁸⁸¹ Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition'.

⁸⁸² See Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition', 388-89. Against this point see Willitts, 'Friendship', 7.

⁸⁸³ Sim, 'Matt. 28:16-20 as an Anti-Pauline Tradition', 390.

⁸⁸⁴ Similarly, B. L. White has pointed out that Matthew would have been more explicit on the point of circumcision specifically. White, '(Mis)Reading Matthew through Paul', 375.

as Sim has claimed. Sim's analysis does stand perfectly soundly as a later interpretation of the Matthean text; the nature of the Gentile mission that Matthew commissioned indeed did undermine Pauline claims about what the Gentile mission entailed (Gal. 2:7-9). Instead of there being two missions and two gospels, one for Jews and one for Gentiles, for Matthew there is one to all nations. Instead of Paul leading the mission to the Gentiles, in Matthew the disciples are charged with this responsibility as a part of their mission to all nations. Matthew and Paul's ideas of the missionary work of the early church clearly do not align, but this does not mean that Matthew was intentionally countering the mission of Paul in his great commission.

Overall, the five passages Sim has highlighted as painting a picture of anti-Pauline rhetoric do not stand as strong evidence of his primary thesis of an anti-Pauline intention in Matthew. While some of the above passages possibly criticise a Law-free gospel, there are alternative explanations for them, and at no point do they point to a specifically *Pauline* Law-free gospel as their target. All of the above texts could reasonably be described as anti-Pauline if there was a continuing and clear theme of anti-Paulinism in the Matthean Gospel,⁸⁸⁵ but such a sentiment is not evident, and on their own, these texts cannot be said to indicate an intentional criticism of Paul or Pauline theology.

5.2.4 Conclusions

In sum, Matthew displays no clear indications of a conscious effort to criticise or counter specifically Pauline theology. While it is *possible* that Matthew was intentionally composing a Gospel which was critical of Paul, there is no strong evidence to positively affirm the case. It can be seen that Matthew contains theology that was contrasting to Paul's, but to go the extra step and suggest that Matthew was intentionally critical of Paul goes beyond the evidence in the text. As such, it is only anachronistically that these texts can be described as being oppositional to Paul.

5.3 Chapter 5 Conclusions

This chapter has explored Mark's and Matthew's possible connections with the apostle Paul. It tried to find any direct allusion to Paul or to Pauline ideas in the Gospels in order to establish a further connection with the debate in the earliest church. However, no such explicit references to Paul were found in either Gospel.

Whilst there were many points of similarity between Mark and Paul, those that are most frequently used to demonstrate such a connection (such as the theology of the cross or smaller

⁸⁸⁵ As per Stanton, *Studies in Matthew*, 312-13.

shared ideas) were found to be inadequate indicators of a particular Pauline influence, because these were either too common or too small to show a direct connection. Instead, turning to more controversial similarities between the two showed to be more useful. The first aspect analysed was their common stance on the Law-free gospel for Gentiles; this was a controversial position in the early church, and particularly for Paul for whom it was the cause of much trouble from Law-abiding opposition. This was also an aspect of Mark's Gospel that was not accepted by Matthew, and so this was evidently an aspect of early Christianity that was not widely accepted, and so is a much more appropriate measure for detecting a Pauline influence on Mark. However, it was seen that while Mark and Paul have the same ideas of a gospel that does not require Gentile adherence to the ritual aspects of the Torah, the two do not demonstrate an identical theology on the subject. While Paul's Law-free gospel is heavily tied in with his ideas about the righteousness of faith, and justified with arguments about inheriting this faith from Abraham, none of these appear in Mark's Gospel at all, even though they could easily have been expressed in his story. Given these disparities, it is entirely possible that Paul's and Mark's Law-free gospels were entirely independent of each other. The Law-free movement was larger than Paul, and as there is nothing in Mark's Law-free theology that indicates a Pauline origin, this shared aspect between the two, controversial though it was, alone does not indicate a Pauline influence on Mark. The second point that was explored was their mutual negativity about members of the Jerusalem church, an attitude that was also not universally held, and so again is a more useful gauge for detecting a Pauline influence on the evangelist. However, it was seen that there are some significant disparities on how these two are negative about these figures; Mark is much more harsh towards the Jerusalem apostles than Paul ever was, and though this disparity is not unexplainable it is still notable. More significantly, Mark's portrayal of the Jerusalem apostles is never connected to ideas about the Law, and there are only two very subtle references to the disciples being resistant to one of Jesus' Gentile journeys, but this hardly demonstrates that Mark was negative about the disciples *because* of their different ideas about the Law or Gentile mission and further, negative perceptions of the Jerusalem apostles is also seen in the Gospel of John, another Law-free but non-Pauline text. As such, once again, there is nothing in Mark's portrayal of the disciples to suggest that he inherited this dislike of these figures from Paul. As such, while it is *possible* that Mark was influenced by Paul, there is nothing within the Gospel that demonstrates that Mark received his Law-free theology and negative attitude towards Jesus' disciples and family from the apostle to the Gentiles.

A similar conclusion was reached for Matthew's connection with Paul. While there is no evidence that Matthew knew Paul's letters, it was assumed that Matthew most likely would have had access to Pauline theology in some form. It was also seen that Matthew had reason to criticise Paul due to their very different ideas about Gentiles and the Law, which was a controversial and defining point in the early church. However, the texts that have been put forward, by D. C. Sim and

others, as demonstrating an anti-Pauline attitude in Matthew do not hold up to scrutiny, and do not demonstrate a critical attitude towards a particularly Pauline theology. While Matt. 5:17-19 displays the strongest criticism of a Law-free theology, there are no distinct Pauline ideas in this passage that could indicate that Matthew was implying that Paul was his target as opposed to a general Law-free theology. Anti-Pauline interpretation of Matt. 7:21-23 relies on a particularly unique and contested interpretation of ἀνομία. But even if it did refer to those who did not follow Torah, there is no other indication in the passage that Matthew was inferring Pauline ideas – the outlined actions of prophesying, exorcism, and performing miracles (7:22) were in no way unique to Pauline Christianity, and so the target of Matthew's polemic in 7:21-23 and the surrounding passages is unclear. The parable of the tares (13:24-30, 36-43) as a criticism of Paul once again relies on the contested meaning of the term ἀνομία, and once again, there is no indication that this was a specifically Pauline attack. Matthew's blessing upon Peter in 16:17-19 is not critical of any particular target, but it has still been isolated as a text which was critical of Paul. But while the idea of Jesus handing on the gospel and authority to Peter can be seen to undermine Pauline ideas, there is no clear indication that this was Matthew's intent. Paul himself never denied Peter's authority, and the verbal parallels with Galatians 1:12, 16-17 are minimal and would unlikely have been picked up on by Matthew's audience. Finally, the great commission of 28:16-20, was also seen to not actively criticise Pauline ideas. Like the commissioning of Peter, this commissioning of the disciples is another passage where Matthew is not actively criticising any party. While the act of commissioning the disciples might be seen retrospectively as undermining Pauline ideas about the Gentile mission, there is no indication that Matthew was intending to criticise Pauline ideas in this passage. As with Mark, though it is entirely *possible* that Matthew could have been criticising a Pauline theology in his Gospel, there is no strong and direct evidence that suggests this was the intent of the evangelist.

While the conclusions of both discussions has been that there was most likely no direct connection with Paul, both are open to the *possibility* that they were responses to Pauline ideas. There is also nothing that positively affirms such a scenario, but nothing in the texts analysed discounts that Paul was in the minds of the evangelists.

The discussion here has extended the current debates on the relationship between Paul and the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, and drawn the early church into the questions of their possible connection. On the question of Mark and Paul, current scholarship seems to be favouring a Mark-Paul connection, as highlighted by J. Marcus and others. The analysis here, which looked for a distinctly Pauline interpretation of similarities between Mark and Paul, found that the Markan Gospel does not demonstrate specifically Pauline theology. In this way, the conclusion here is possibly closer to that of M. Werner, who argued that Mark and Paul only had commonalities with

Christianity generally. While discussion in this study has disagreed with Werner and argued that Mark and Paul agreed on ideas that were certainly *not* common for all Christians in the first century, it is possible that Mark's and Paul's ideas about the Law and the Jerusalem church were common for all *Law-free* Christians in the first century. On the connection between Matthew and Paul, scholarship as it stands now is varied. Against the hypothesis of D. C. Sim that Matthew was consciously countering Pauline theology in his gospel, the analysis here has concluded that there is no particularly Pauline aspect of Matthew's critiques of a Law-free gospel. While Matthew may have been denounced the general Law-free gospel, and by doing so including Paul in his critique, the textual evidence does not indicate a particularly Pauline target in Matthew. While these questions have been resurfaced in biblical scholarship at about the same time, the two questions have not been studied together before. Looking at these two questions together, as has been done here, has allowed the full context of the church to be taken into account when answering them. The Law-free movement was bigger than Paul, and the scale of the disputes in the early church extended beyond his missionary career. As such, the Law-free stance in Mark, and the anti-Law-free stance in Matthew cannot be said to be attributed to the influence of Pauline theology.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

This study set out to analyse Mark and Matthew in the specific framework of early church debates around the Law for Gentiles to see how these Gospels, written after the major events in the early church, reflected this controversy. This was an area of research that had not been addressed in a single study, and a comprehensive view of both evangelists through the specific context has demonstrated how pervasive the debate about Gentiles and the Law continued to be in the first century church. It was seen that when studied through this framework, Mark and Matthew cleanly align with different traditions; Mark with the Law-free tradition of Paul, and Matthew with the Law-abiding tradition of the disciples and Jesus' family in Jerusalem.

A background chapter contained a brief history of the early Christian movement and the different perceptions of how the Law was to be applied to Gentiles. The earliest signs of difference come from the Hebrews and the Hellenists. The Hellenists were persecuted in Jerusalem, fled to Antioch, where Luke says some took the first steps to take the word to Gentiles, and later makes clear that this mission was one that did not require Gentiles to undergo circumcision (Acts 15:1-2). At the same time as this Hellenist mission, the Hebrews had stayed on in Jerusalem, and continued to live within the bounds of Second Temple Judaism which included adherence to the Torah. When they heard of the Hellenist Law-free mission, they sent delegates to Antioch to summon the leaders there to a meeting in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Council was designed to deal with the issue of Gentile adherence to the Law, but events that followed the Council indicate that whatever resolution may or may not have been reached there, the different opinions continued. This is particularly evident at the Incident at Antioch, when men from James prompted Peter to withdraw from dining with Gentiles in an effort to follow the Torah. Paul objected severely, but he was overcome and was forced to depart from Antioch and start his own independent mission. It was also concluded that it is likely that the pillars in Jerusalem, namely Peter and James, adhered to the Law-abiding tradition, before and after the Council.

This tension over Gentile adherence to the Torah continued to be seen in Paul's independent missions. This is most prominent in the crisis at Galatia, where Law-observant teachers had come and (somewhat successfully) convinced the Gentile Christians there to start adhering to the Torah. This is evident in Paul's letter from his defence of the authority of his gospel, and his defence of the Law-free aspect of this gospel. Similar sentiments are also found in Paul's other letters, such as those to Corinth, where there are divisions that possibly fall along Pauline and Petrine lines, and where there are possibly-related criticisms of Paul's apostleship. Paul's letter to the Philippians demonstrates that he was expecting a Law-abiding mission to approach the church at Philippi, and he warns the Philippians against these people who 'are the

circumcision' (Phil. 3:3). Overall, during Paul's independent missions there continued to be considerable tension over the perspectives of the Law, often resulting in claims against Paul's apostleship, and these tensions did not resolve themselves at any point. Similar patterns and clashes are seen in the literature written after Paul's death, particularly in the accusations which Paul faced in Luke's community, the trouble that Law-abiding teachers caused deuterio-Pauline authors, the anti-Pauline sentiment recorded in the Law-abiding letter of James, and in the anti-Judaizing messages in the letters of Ignatius of Antioch. While there are some hints to suggest that the leaders of the Jerusalem Church were behind some of these later anti-Pauline missions, there is too little evidence to draw such a conclusion. Whoever initiated these anti-Pauline missions, the evidence is strong that there was no universal resolution as to whether the Law should apply to Gentiles and so the issue was still the cause of considerable tension.

The second chapter looked at the Gospel of Mark, and it was seen that Mark aligns cleanly with the Law-free tradition of the early church. This is demonstrated in the Markan Jesus' active efforts to preach to Gentile territories, in his stories which promote a Gentile mission, and in his dismissal and toning down of some ritualistic aspects of the Law. The Markan Jesus actively seeks a Gentile mission that is portrayed as quite separate to his mission to the Jews; with the Sea of Galilee as a frequent marker, Jesus often crosses between Jewish towns on one side, and Gentile towns on another side, but as the Gospel goes on, the Markan Jesus spends more time in Gentile territory. This activity is supported by Markan Jesus' teaching and actions, which demonstrate that he is consciously and actively going to the Gentiles. This is seen in the story of his interaction with the Syrophenician woman, who convinces him to give Gentiles the crumbs from the table, and in the feeding of the four thousand Gentiles on Gentile land, both of which symbolise that his ministry is as open to Gentiles as to Jews. In his preaching to the Gentiles, Jesus does not try to convert them to Judaism, but rather welcomes them as they are. Mark also demonstrates his Law-free beliefs by having his Jesus actively lower the importance of the Torah throughout the narrative. This is seen in the Sabbath controversies, where Jesus questions justifies his disciples' breach of the Law, and in Jesus' statements about food laws, when Mark concludes that Jesus purified all foods. Thus, when seen through the framework of the early church, Mark is seen to be in alignment with the Law-free tradition; just as Paul had not required Gentiles to convert to Judaism, neither did Mark; just as Paul lowered the importance of the Torah for the sake of welcoming Gentiles to the good news, so did Mark.

The third chapter focused on the Gospel of Matthew, and it was seen that Matthew has a more conservative stance on the Law than Mark, and this is displayed explicitly in the Gospel. This is most obvious in Matt. 5:17-19, where the Matthean Jesus explicitly states that he did not come to abolish the Law, that every part of the Law should be obeyed until the end of time, and that those

who did not would be counted least in the Kingdom of Heaven. Matthew also is clear that it is the Law – as interpreted by Jesus – that has authority. This attitude is carried throughout the Gospel; it is seen in the over-arching theme of judgement, and the criteria for judgement which Matthew espouses, Matthew's amendments to Mark on the topic of the Law also demonstrate that he had more conservative views compared to his source. In Matthew, the Gentile mission is placed entirely within this structure. Matthew advocates a Gentile mission in the final scene of his Gospel (28:16-20), and nothing in the text warrants a change of theology or direction in this commission. As such, the Gentile mission that the Matthean Jesus commissions takes place within the framework that the Gospel has itself set; that is a framework within Judaism and within enduring adherence to the Torah. This is confirmed in Jesus' instructions to continue teaching what he has taught them. As such, the Matthean Jesus advocates a Law-abiding mission to the Gentiles. In this way the Gospel of Matthew aligns itself cleanly with the Law-abiding tradition of the early church, and with the disciples and family of Jesus in Jerusalem.

The fourth chapter looked to further connect the Gospels with the debates in the early church, and it looked to how each Gospel portrays those in the Law-abiding tradition; James, the brother of Jesus, Peter, and the other disciples and family of Jesus. Turning firstly to Mark and his negative portrait of the disciples and Jesus' family is widely acknowledged. While the disciples start off in a positive light, as the narrative progresses they show themselves to be inadequate for their role. Mark highlights that they frequently misunderstand Jesus, they are resistant to his teaching, possibly including his Gentile mission, and they end up deserting Jesus at his arrest. There is no resurrection narrative, as there is in the other Gospels that might suggest redemption on their part. The family of Jesus in Mark are also portrayed quite poorly. They only appear twice, and in these two appearances, Mark suggests that they accuse Jesus of being mad (indirectly accusing them of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit), Jesus rejects them as his family, and Mark notes that Jesus is unable to do works of power around them. Taken together, this portrait of the figures that were at the head of the Law-abiding gospel in the early church forms a criticism of those who headed the Law-abiding movement. Seen through the lens of the early church debates, it is likely that Mark was attempting to undermine the authority of the Jerusalem Church.

Matthew, on the other hand, rehabilitates these figures in his Gospel. Whilst carrying over the basic narrative and stories from Mark's portrayal, he has changed smaller and larger aspects of their characters in order to make these figures seem more worthy; he emphasises their understanding, tones down Jesus' anger with them, and changes their responses in some stories to be more worthy of their position. While Matthew does keep a lot of the negative aspects that are featured in Mark, the overall picture is still quite positive. Most important for this study is that Matthew inserts traditions where Jesus explicitly designates future roles for the disciples in his

church. This is especially seen in his resurrection narrative, where Jesus does meet with the disciples after his resurrection, and he commissions them with the mission to the nations. Alongside this, Matthew has emphasised the role and importance of Peter, adding new narratives that increase the interaction between him and Jesus, and giving Peter absolute authority in the future church. Matthew has thus overturned Mark's delegitimisation of the disciples, instead giving them explicit power and authority from Jesus. Matthew gives a similar, though less significant treatment to Jesus' family; the addition of the infancy narrative ensures that from the outset of the Gospel Jesus' family are portrayed as obedient to God. Matthew keeps the two appearances they have in Mark, but considerably tones down the criticism they are handed, so that in Matthew these stories are at worst underwhelming for Jesus' family. Given the context of the early church, it is likely that Matthew's amendments do not stem purely from an effort to refine Mark, but from a closer affinity with the Law-abiding tradition of the early church, and an effort to assert their authority. As such, this fourth chapter demonstrated that Mark and Matthew go further in their connection to the early church than just aligning theologies about Gentiles and the Law; they also have conscious connections seen in their efforts to portray figures in the early church in a way that justifies their position on the Law.

The final chapter looked at how each Gospel might be related to the primary figure in the Law-free tradition, the apostle Paul; was Mark influenced by Paul and did Matthew intentionally criticise Pauline theology? It was seen that the frequently cited similarities between Mark and Paul, such as their focus on the cross, did not make a good case for a distinctly Pauline influence on Mark because such similarities were common in early Christianity, and other frequently cited similarities were too small or inconsequential to demonstrate a connection. Instead, the Law-free gospel that both authors promoted as well as their displayed tension with members of the Jerusalem Church was explored to see whether distinctly Pauline interpretations of these topics could be seen. However, there was no strong evidence that Mark's Law-free theology is based on the same arguments as Paul's, or that Mark disliked the disciples for the same reasons that Paul was in tension with them. The Law-free movement was bigger than Paul, as was dislike of the Jerusalem church. As such, it was concluded that while it is possible that Mark knew distinctly Pauline theology, there is no strong evidence that demonstrates it. On the question of anti-Paulinism in Matthew it was seen that the two authors indeed stood at opposite sides of the early church disputes, and had conflicting ideas about Gentiles adherence to the Torah. And while Matthew's Gospel does contain sentiments that criticise a Law-free gospel, it was found that there is no evidence that Matthew was criticising a particularly Pauline Law-free gospel. Despite Matthew having due cause to dislike and criticise Paul, and while it is again possible that Matthew had a Pauline theology in mind when including anti-Law-free sentiments in his Gospel narrative, the lack of distinctly Pauline ideas or themes in these sentiments means that there is no indication

of an anti-Pauline attitude in Matthew. Both Mark and Matthew can be aligned with or against Paul in retrospect, but such an intention cannot be detected from either evangelist.

This study has filled a gap in the literature by providing a full-scale analysis of Mark *and* Matthew in the wider context of the early church disagreements about Gentile adherence to the Jewish Law. One of the results of studying this problem in such a wide scale is that it can be seen that this issue was immense and consistent. The issue began in the earliest years of the church, and was so significant that it not only resulted in the first Apostolic Council in Jerusalem, but the Council failed to resolve it. It then followed Paul through his independent missionary career, even after his death, and it found clear expressions in other Christian correspondence. Both Mark and Matthew, whilst having other bigger focuses, still have incorporated the controversy completely into their Gospel narrative, using their Gospels as a defence and justification of their different positions. Incorporating the first two evangelists into the context of the early church on this issue allows for the full scale of the debate in the early church to be observed in multiple texts and in multiple generations in the church.

The reason this was such a big issue for the early church was because this question had fundamental implications for what it meant to be a follower of Christ. Was being a Christian a fundamentally Jewish identity, or could it exist outside of Judaism? Did a universalising mission from Jesus mean opening up Judaism to the world, or did it mean disregarding key elements of Judaism in order to be more universally applicable? The entire issue is fundamentally a consequence of translating what was originally a Jewish messianic movement into a Gentile setting and context. Given the ramifications of such a dilemma it is perhaps of no surprise that there was no neat and early agreement.

Despite the broad scale of this study, it is still limited in scope, and the same questions and context can easily be extended and applied to other New Testament texts in order to see how else this debate was reflected in the documents of the early church. Of particular interest would be to analyse Luke's Gospel; Acts demonstrates that the third evangelist was conscious of the debates about the Law and Gentiles, and so studying how the Lukan Jesus responds to the issues of Gentiles and the Torah in his ministry would be a pertinent follow-up, as well as studying his use of the Law-free Mark in the same context. So, too, could analysis of John on the topics of the Law and the Jerusalem Church shed light on how his Law-free position affected his theology.

The later Christian church eventually did become entirely Law-free. While there were some later Law-abiding Christians that the church fathers highlighted as heretical,⁸⁸⁶ how these groups linked back to the Law-abiding Christians in the early church is uncertain, as is their fate. There is some indication that they were familiar with the Matthean Gospel,⁸⁸⁷ but Matthew ultimately became a treasured Gospel of the dominant Law-free church despite his allegiance to the Law-abiding movement. However this aspect of Matthew was largely unseen by the early church, which continued to use his Gospel considerably more than the other Gospels, and especially more than the Law-free Mark, who barely survived under the shadow of his successor. The fundamental Jewishness of Matthew was also overlooked, and the inter-Jewish conflicts so prevalent in the Matthean narrative were not seen as inter-Jewish debates about how to interpret the Law more faithfully, but were instead interpreted as scathing indictments upon Judaism generally and as condemnation of Jewish Law altogether. Tragically and ironically, it was the most Jewish of the Gospels that was used as a justification of anti-Semitism for millennia in the then universally Law-free Christian tradition.

Both Mark and Matthew's awareness of the ongoing issues in the early church demonstrates their connectivity to earlier traditions. The Gospels did not exist in isolation, but were a result of the figures and theologies that were established before them. The evangelists' keen awareness and opinions on whether Gentiles needed to adhere to the Torah demonstrates this aptly; Mark, written not long after the end of Paul's ministry, has incorporated a Law-free message and perspective into his pioneering narrative about Jesus' life. Matthew, imitating Mark's genre and basic story line, has done the same, only for his opposing Law-abiding view. The evangelists thus help to demonstrate the extent of this disagreement in the early church, even if their efforts to do so were largely unrecognised and unappreciated in the centuries that followed.

⁸⁸⁶ Such as the Ebionites and the Nazareans. See A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 19-51.

⁸⁸⁷ See *The Gospel of the Nazareans*, which has strong parallels with the evangelist.

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